

**FOSTER'S AUCTION BRIDGE**

# FOSTER'S AUCTION BRIDGE

A COMPLETE EXPOSITION OF THE MODERN  
THEORY OF DISTRIBUTION AND APPROACH-  
ING BIDS WITH THE LATEST RULES AND  
SCORING FOR CONTRACT BRIDGE

THE FULL CODE OF THE OFFICIAL LAWS  
DEALS FROM ACTUAL PLAY

BY

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"BRIDGE FOR BEGINNERS," "FOSTER'S BRIDGE TACTICS," ETC.

*"FEW RULES—MANY EXAMPLES"*

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years ago, but it was this take-out, more than any one thing, that settled the championship of the auction bridge world at Chicago in 1926

The trump-leading defence is another outcome of the study of distribution which had been completely overlooked by all writers on the game, but which has proved to be one of the greatest game savers ever discovered

Four-card suit bids are now quite the thing, and minor-suit bids on three cards to the ace-king are freely used. The selection of the opening bid, the rules for the assist, the denial, the shift, and defensive leads, can all be shown as based on distributional values, which it is the purpose of this work to explain in full

The one hundred and three illustrative hands are all taken from actual play. There are no "freaks" among them. No one can tell you how to manage freaks. The methods employed by acknowledged masters of the game are allowed to emerge from these examples in such a manner as to show that they consistently follow a well understood system of beating averages, which is based on distribution

The bidding and play in each of these one hundred and three hands seems to demonstrate that if one will only follow the elementary principles of the game in average hands, one can let the freaks take care of themselves. To mismanage the one hand in a hundred which happens to be a freak is nothing compared to the losses of the average player, who can usually be depended upon to make one or two bad calls in every rubber, and to lose a trick in every other hand he plays

Examine any hand in which a bid has failed, or tricks have been lost in the play, and it will invariably be found due to a violation of some simple principle. Suits that were not denied, assists that were not justified, doubles that were unsound, or, in the play, trumps that were not

separated, losers that were not discarded, discards that meant nothing, encouraging cards that were not played double finesses that were not arranged for, re-entries that were not attended to, or something equally elementary, any of which can be shown to be governed by the general law of distribution

There are doubtless one or two things in the following pages that some will not agree to. There are things that the experts overlook, but it can be shown that they lose by it. They have never given them a fair trial for a sufficient time to form an opinion that would be based on experience instead of theory. It takes time for even the best players to take up new ideas. As far back as 1906 in "Foster's Complete Bridge" I demonstrated the soundness of a free bid on five to the ace king, and recommended four-card suit bids. For eleven years the authorities ridiculed these calls, even in minor suits. Now they all recommend them. Why? Because they finally concluded to try them.

Many still consider the weak take-out of a no trumper is unsound, and advance many ingenious but purely theoretical arguments against it, instead of trying it out for a hundred rubbers or so. My recommendations are not theory, but are based on a careful examination of every possible bid and play in a thousand no-trumpers. The tabulated results of this analysis are given in "Foster's Bridge Tactics". The gains that would have resulted from this weak take-out if it had been used by the players in the 1927 championships at Chicago are pointed out in the following pages.

I have always maintained that the informatory double did more harm than good, except perhaps when used against inferior players, or as a bluff, yet almost every writer extols its merits as one of the greatest additions to the

tactics of the game The recorded details of the bidding in the 1927 championships, and its results, have gone far to expose this convention as a failure when met by the proper defence In the hands of eight of the finest players in the United States, so far from the informatory double being of any value, it proved a decided loser. The facts are given in the following pages, and facts are stubborn things

I am free to acknowledge that much of what I have myself written in the past is now *passé*, and that not more than five per cent of the hands that were put forward as representative of first-class bidding and play five years ago would be considered as such to day The matter contained in this work is a straightforward presentation of what will undoubtedly be the game of the future, both in auction and in contract bridge

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# FOSTER'S AUCTION BRIDGE

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## HOW BRIDGE IS PLAYED

There are four active players, two of whom are partners against the two others, a partnership being called a "side". It is usual to provide two packs of cards, with distinctive backs, one for each side, the packs being used alternately, the dealer's partner shuffling the "still pack" while the other is dealt. The still pack is then placed at the left of the next dealer.

The cards rank from the ace, king, queen, down to the trey and deuce. The ace is the highest card for all purposes except in cutting, when it is the lowest. For bidding purposes the suits rank: spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs, spades being the highest. Hearts and spades are sometimes referred to as the major, or playing suits, clubs and diamonds as the minor, or helping suits. This is to distinguish the suits that are most commonly bid and played as trumps from the suits that are usually shown in the hope that they may assist or encourage the partner to do something better, and also to indicate defensive strength.

No trumps outrank all suits in the bidding.

If four or more persons are candidates for play, a thoroughly shuffled pack is spread face downward on the table, and each candidate for play draws a card without showing it. The four cards at each end are not allowed to be drawn from. When all have drawn they turn their cards face up, and the four lowest in rank form the table, the two lowest being partners against the two next lowest, the lowest of the four being the dealer for the first hand,



and having the choice of seat and cards his partner sitting opposite. If more than one card is exposed or if any player shows his card before the drawing is complete all must draw again from a freshly shuffled pack.

If two draw cards of equal numerical value the rank of the suits decides the tie. As between the sixes of clubs and spades the club would have the preference, being of lower rank. Five or six persons may belong to a table, those failing to enter for the first rubber coming in for the next rubber.

The dealer having chosen his seat, his partner opposite him the adversaries fill the remaining seats. The pack selected by the dealer must be thoroughly shuffled by the adversary on his left, and then presented to the adversary on the dealer's right to be cut, not less than four cards being left in each packet. The dealer completes the cut by reuniting the two packets.

Beginning on the dealer's left, the cards are dealt one at a time from left to right until each player has thirteen. All irregularities in the deal will be found dealt with in the laws.

## THE AUCTION

Each player picks up his hand, sorts it into suits, and prepares for the auction, which is to decide whether the hand shall be played with a trump suit or with no trumps and who shall play the dummy, the privilege being bid for by all four players, the dealer having the first say, to bid or pass.

As there are thirteen tricks to be played for in every hand the seventh trick won by the same side is called the odd trick, and all bids undertake to win one or more odd tricks. *The value of these odd tricks varies, according to the suit that is the trump, or when the hand is played at no trumps*

If clubs are trumps each odd trick is worth	6
If diamonds are trumps, each odd trick is worth	7
If hearts are trumps, each odd trick is worth	8
If spades are trumps, each odd trick is worth	9
If there are no trumps, each odd trick is worth	10

Doubling doubles these values Redoubling multiplies by four

These values are the only points that count toward game and the object of the play is to reach 30 or more Any thing beyond the 30 points that decide the game is scored as part of that game If one side is 24 up and makes 36 on the next deal while wanting only 6 points to win the game, they add the 36 to the 24 and start the next game from zero for both sides

The dealer makes the first declaration on each hand dealt This may be to win any number of odd tricks from one to seven, in any suit, or without a trump, or he may pass announcing "No bid" Each player in turn to the left must then pass, bid higher, or double If all four players pass without a bid, the deal passes to the player on the dealer's left, who deals with the still pack

Any player, in his proper turn, may overcall the last bid, whether made by his own partner or an adversary, but he must name a greater number of tricks in the same suit, or the same number of tricks in a suit of higher rank or something of greater scoring value in an inferior suit If the values are equal he must bid a greater number of tricks in the lower suit No trumps will overcall all suits for an equal number of tricks

It will take five clubs (30) to overcall three spades (27), six clubs (36) to overcall four spades (36) or four hearts (32) It will take six diamonds (42) to overcall four spades (36), or four clubs (24) to overcall two no trumps

(20) , or five diamonds (35) to overcall three no trumps (30)

In "Majority Calling" the same number of tricks in any higher suit, or one more trick in anything is sufficient to overcall, which is much simpler and avoids many mistakes.

Instead of bidding or passing, any player in his proper turn may double the last bid made by an adversary. A player cannot double his own partner, but if his partner is doubled either of them may redouble in his proper turn but that ends it. Doubling does not stop the bidding, nor does it change the bidding value of the last call made. Three spades will overcall three of any other suit, or four clubs, even if doubled or redoubled.

The double is supposed to imply a doubt as to the bidder's ability to make good, and is aimed at securing penalties for the prospective failure. Redoubling implies confidence that the bid can be made. Doubling does not require the bidder to make double the number of tricks bid, but only the "contract," as it is called.

Any player may change the suit from that named in the last bid, bid the same suit, or shift to no trumps, or from no-trumps to a suit, or he may even bid against his own partner, as long as the bid is higher than the last one made. Bidding more tricks in the partner's suit is called 'assisting', shifting to another suit or to no trumps is called "denying", shifting from no trumps to a suit is called "taking out".

When three players in succession pass the last bid or double it becomes the winning declaration, and is called the "contract". Only the side that secures the contract can score toward game. All their adversaries can do is to prevent them from fulfilling their contract, stop them from going game, or get penalties.

The partner who first named the winning declaration plays the hand, regardless of what bids have intervened.

his partner becoming dummy. Suppose the bidding starts with the dealer's one heart, second hand two clubs, third hand two hearts and fourth hand two spades. The dealer doubles two spades, second hand bids three diamonds, third hand three hearts, and fourth hand four clubs, which all pass.

Although the second hand shifted from clubs to diamonds, and his partner actually made the winning declaration, four clubs, the second hand becomes the 'declarer,' because he first named clubs and his side got the contract in clubs. His partner's bids are considered as being simply assists.

### THE PLAY

The contract settled, and the value of the tricks decided by doubling, if any, the player to the left of the declarer leads any card he pleases, whereupon the dealer's partner lays his thirteen cards face up upon the table, sorted into suits, the trumps, if any, preferably to his right. He then becomes dummy for that deal, the declarer playing all the cards from both hands without any suggestions from his partner.

Each player in turn must follow suit if able to do so, and the highest card played if of the suit led, wins the trick, trumps winning all other suits. The four cards form a trick, which is taken in by the side winning it and turned face down, the declarer gathering all tricks won by his side, either of the adversaries gathering for their side. The tricks should be kept slightly separated, so as to be readily counted. The winner of each trick leads for the next, the declarer leading or playing for dummy when it is dummy's turn.

A player is not obliged to win any trick, even if able to do so. If unable to follow suit, he may either trump or

discard. Failure to follow suit when able to do so is a renounce which if not corrected in time becomes a revoke the penalty for which is that the side in error cannot score anything but honours as held.

If it is an adversary of the declarer that revokes the declarer has the option of taking 100 points in honours, or two actual tricks, scoring them just as if they were won in play, except that they do not carry any bonus, and cannot count toward slams. Dummy cannot be penalized for a revoke under any circumstances. The partner of a player who renounces to a lead should always ask if he has none of the suit led, so as to protect himself against revoke penalties.

The first six tricks taken by the declarer's side is his "book." *The adversaries' book is the difference between the contract and seven.* If the contract is four hearts, the declarer must win four tricks over his book, or ten altogether. The adversaries' book is three tricks ( $7-4=3$ ), and every trick they win over their book "sets" the contract and entitles them to the penalties shown in the chapter on Scoring.

As soon as the thirteenth trick is taken in the number won by the declarer is counted, and if the contract is fulfilled the score is put down on a pad prepared for the purpose. The deal then passes to the player on the left of the last dealer, who is identified by the position of the still pack on his left. The position of this still pack should be carefully attended to, as the declarer is not always the one who dealt.

As soon as either side wins a game, a line is drawn under it on the score pad, and the side first winning two games wins the rubber. If one side wins two successive games, a third is not played. The scores are then entered to the credit of the individual players on a special pad, or they

may settle up at once, each loser paying the winner on his right.

If there are others waiting to cut into the table, those who have just played draw cards to decide on the outgoers, the highest cards retiring. After the second rubber, those who have played two rubbers draw cards to decide the outgoers. When there are only four belonging to a table, they may either cut again for partners, seats and deal, or they may agree to "pivot," the host or hostess sitting still and playing one rubber with each of the others in turn. If the three move always in the same direction, from left to right, one passing behind the pivot, it will bring the adversary that was on the right the first time to be on the left next time for all the partnerships.

## SCORING

At the end of each game the result is recorded on a pad which is ruled in two vertical columns one for each side. At the top are placed the initials of the partners and the colour of the pack they selected to play with. These columns are again divided into two parts by a heavy horizontal line below which are entered all the trick points that score toward game. Above this line are entered all honour scores, bonuses and penalties, none of which score toward game, although they affect the ultimate value of the rubber.

Only the declarer's side can score toward game, and then only when the tricks won equal or exceed the number named in the contract. Each trick over the declarer's book is worth 6 points if clubs are trumps, 7 if diamonds, 8 if hearts, 9 if spades, 10 if there are no trumps.

If the adversaries have doubled the final bid these values are doubled. If the declarer's side has redoubled, they are multiplied by four, so that two spades doubled would be worth 36 points and game, if made. In addition to this double value the declarer scores 50 points "above the line" for fulfilling a doubled contract, and 50 more for each trick above that contract, if any. If the contract is two spades doubled, and the declarer wins four odd, he would score 72 below the line and 150 above. If redoubled these amounts would be doubled.

If the declarer fails to make good his bid his adversaries score 50 points above the line for each "undertrick", 100 if they doubled, 200 if they were redoubled. The failure is usually expressed by saying the declarer is "down" or "set" so many.

## HONOUR SCORES

In addition to the trick scores there are five honours in the trump suit, A, K, Q, J, 10. In no trumps the four

aces are the only honours. All honours are scored above the line by the side holding them regardless of who is the declarer or what may be the result of the play. The value of the honours varies with the value of the trump suit.

3 honours between partners equal	2 tricks
4 honours between partners equal	4
5 honours between partners equal	5
4 honours in one hand equal	8
4 in one hand fifth in partner	9
5 honours in one hand equal	10
3 aces at no trump are worth	30 points
4 aces between partners are worth	40
4 aces in one hand are worth	100

These honour values are not affected by doubling or redoubling.

With hearts trumps four honours divided between partners would be scored as 32 above the line. If spades were trumps and the declarer won three tricks his adversaries having three honours usually called simple honours he would score 27 below the line and they would take 15 above the line.

## SIAM AND BONUS SCORES

If either side wins 12 out of the 13 tricks it scores 50 points above the line for a little slam whether that side is the declarer's or his adversaries. For winning all 13 tricks 100 is scored for the grand slam. If grand slam is bid and only 12 tricks won the declarer is set 50-100 if doubled. Slams are scored in addition to all other scores.

Suppose the contract is five spades doubled and the declarer makes a little slam with four honours in one hand. He scores  $6 \times 15 = 108$  below the line winning the game. Above the line he scores  $6 \times 9 = 72$  for four honours in spades in one hand, 50 bonus for fulfilling a doubled



three odd and 30 aces, scored at "d," with a line drawn under the second game won

We dealt bid one heart, with simple honours against them, made two hearts and caught the adversaries in a revoke. Taking two tricks gave them four odd and game with 250 for winning the rubber, scored at 'e

Upon adding up, the lower score, 154 is deducted from the higher, 582, and the difference, 428 is the value of the rubber. In settling, it is usual to throw off all points below 50, and to add 100 for all above 49. Playing for so much a hundred, this would be a "four rubber." If the stakes are high parts of 50 or even of 25, may be disregarded in the same way.

Sometimes each losing player pays the winner on his right immediately upon the conclusion of the rubber, but if settlement is deferred the account is kept on a separate sheet, usually called a "washbook," or "flogger." Here is an example of the results of four rubbers, the values being reduced to even hundreds, and the value of each rubber stated at the top.

Rubber Values			5		3		4		6	
			+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-
A	B	White	5		5		9		15	
C	D	Red	5		8		8		2	
E	F	Black		5		2		2		8
G	H	Blue		5		5		9		9
J	K	Brown				3		7		1
L	M	Green				3	1		1	

White and Red won the first rubber from Black and Blue. Then White and Blue were cut out to give place to Brown and Green for the second rubber. Red and Black cut as partners and won it. White and Blue's scores are

## ARRANGED COMPETITIONS

There are many ways of playing bridge apart from the regulation rubber of four at a table cutting in for partners etc., or the well known pivot game, in which each player has each of the three others for a partner in turn. Most of these variations are for a larger number of players than would form a single table, and are usually for prizes for the best individual or pair scores.

Eight individuals, playing four deals with each of the seven others as a partner can be so arranged as to play twice against each of the seven others as an adversary, once with him on the right, once on the left, the players sitting opposite numbers on cards placed in the centre of the table thus

	5			4
*8	A	1		2 B 6
	7			3

One player, usually the hostess or the guest of honour, takes the pivot position, No 8, at table A, sitting still during the entire play of the 28 deals.

At the end of four deals the trick and honour scores are added up, giving a bonus of 125 points\*for any game won outright on a single deal, without the aid of any previous partial score. Each player has an individual score card. No 1 then moves to the place of No 2, at table B, 2 goes to 3, 3 to 4 and so on, No 7 going to 1. After the first movement it should be easy for each player to note the person whose position is taken, and to follow that order through the evening. The highest individual score is the winner, the lower having been deducted from the higher at each table before leaving it, and scoring only the points won, if any, but it is fairer to keep account of both losses and winnings at each table and strike a balance at the end.

For more than four couples, partnerships may be drawn

for or chosen, and the progression is "up the sides and down the middle." Suppose this to be the initial position

	6		5		4			
1	A	1	2	B	2	3	C	3
	6		5		4			

Pair No. 1 is the pivot. After playing four deals pair 6 goes down the middle by replacing pair 2 who go to 3 while 3 turn the corner and go up the sides replacing 4 5 and 6 in turn. If there are more than three tables, a less number of deals must be played to bring about all the meetings in one evening's play.

In large social games for prizes, such as charity benefits where players make up their own tables it is necessary to provide against foolish or unscrupulous players doubling everything so that some one of the four shall have a very large score and secure one of the more valuable prizes.

To avoid this the committee should write out slips with every tenth number from 1 000 to 1 250 and place these 26 slips in an envelope. In another envelope every tenth number up to 1 500 and in a third every tenth number up to 1 750.

After all the scores are turned in and have been sorted into the nearest hundreds, such as all between 1,000 and 1,200 in one lot, one of the committee draws one of the three sealed envelopes and another member of the committee draws a slip from that envelope. The scores that most closely approach the number drawn, above or below it win the prizes.

Suppose the number drawn to be 1 520, and the nearest scores to be 1 546 (26 +), 1,488 (32 -), 1,560 (40 +) that would win the first second and third prizes in that order.

This result is all luck of course, but so is everything in a game in which the cards are shuffled and dealt, and the

players are of such unequal skill as opponents. It has the advantage of being absolutely uninfluenced by any unfair practices and is as fair for one as the other.

### DUPLICATE MATCHES

The theory of duplicate play is that if opposing pairs hold the same cards under the same conditions with regard to the deal and the state of the score, those winning the greater number of points should be considered the better players. The only defect in this scheme is the widely varying strength of the opposing pairs.

Special apparatus is required to play duplicate: trays to carry the cards from table to table, a separate pack of cards for every hand played during the evening, and specially ruled score cards, with a large blackboard for setting forth the results of the play.

As a rule, to run a duplicate game smoothly requires an expert to be placed in charge, who knows how to arrange the tables, how many "boards" to play at each, and who understands the various schemes for moving the players, according to the odd or even number of pairs engaged, and the style of competition, whether to arrive at a single or double result, an individual winner, a winning pair, or a North and South and an East and West pair.

Some players indulge in a family game known as "memory duplicate," in which about a dozen hands are dealt, played, scored and laid aside in trays. Then they are replayed in irregular order, the pair who held the N and S hands on the original play, getting the E and W hands on the replay. In spite of the disordered arrangement of the trays for the replay, board No. 9 being perhaps played as No. 1, there are always one or two deals in which the position is so marked by the bidding or the dummy that the overplay is too much matter of memory to be a real test.

## FIRST PRINCIPLES

After the cards are dealt and before the hand is played there are several points to be settled—whether the hand shall be played with or without a trump suit—and if with a trump which suit—which side is to play the dummy and which of the partners shall be the declarer—how many tricks will they undertake to make and at what value normal or doubled?

These points are all determined by competitive bidding which is always started by the dealer and each side has always a double object in view—to get the contract and play for game or to prevent the other side from doing so. This is usually briefly summarized by saying the bidding has only two objects—to win game or save game.

Successful bidding lies in arriving at the objective best suited to the combined hands. If this is to play for game it must be done by bidding a sufficient number of tricks to get the contract. If it is to save the game against the adversaries' strong hands it must be done by showing what defensive strength can be developed between the two hands up to the limit of safety—or it may be to demonstrate that the only hope is what baseball players call a sacrifice hit—deliberately overbidding the hand and being set so as to prevent the other side from getting a contract that would probably result in giving them the game or rubber.

All these bids require one thoroughly to understand the limitations of the possibilities of any given distribution of cards. It is manifestly useless to try bidding for the contract if one has a very weak hand and to bid on such hands with the idea of "pushing up"—the other side is a dangerous experiment unless one knows just what is risked in case they stop bidding and double. If they are strong

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All these bids require one thoroughly to understand the limitations of the possibilities of any given distribution of cards. It is manifestly useless to try bidding for the contract if one has a very weak hand, and to bid on such hands with the idea of "pushing up" the other side is a dangerous experiment unless one knows just what is risked in case they stop bidding and double. If they are strong

enough to go higher they are probably quite willing to be pushed, but if they have any doubt about their ability to win the game at the score they will easily see there is more to be gained by penalties than by playing the hand as declarer and dummy

The dealer must make a declaration of some kind to start with. If he has nothing worth showing he can pass, announcing "No bid." If he makes a bid he must name a certain number of tricks from one to seven, with a named suit for the trump, or to play without a trump. All bids or "calls" should be clearly made, such as "One heart," or "Three clubs," or "One no trump."

The number of tricks named in the bid is the number of "odd tricks" the bidder undertakes to win with his partner's assistance, therefore although he bids only "One spade" he undertakes to win seven out of the thirteen tricks to be played for, with spades as trumps. If he bids two he must win eight tricks, and so on.

Whether the dealer bids or passes, it becomes the turn of the player on his left to declare himself, and so on round the table, until three players in succession pass the last call made.

When the dealer makes a bid, it is generally classed as a "free bid," because he is not obliged to make it, there being no bid as yet that threatens to take the contract from his side. If the dealer passes, the second hand's bid would be free. The same is true in less degree with regard to the third and fourth hand, after two or three passes, but there is a slight disadvantage in opening the bidding as third or fourth hand, because their partner's hands are presumably below average, not being worth a free bid. This consideration leads careful players to demand somewhat stronger hands than would be thought good enough for a free bid. On the other hand, many



regard such bids as chiefly defensive, unless above average, and designed more to indicate where they can win some tricks if the other side get the contract

The term free bids must be distinguished from "original bids," which are the first made by a player in any position. The dealer having made a bid, second hand has not the opportunity for a free bid, as he is now called upon to defend his side against the attempt of the dealer's side to get the contract. Any declaration made by the second hand to win tricks is called a "following bid."

A following bid may be either of two kinds. It may be made on cards which are quite good enough for a free bid or it may be simply defensive. That is, not strong enough for a free bid in the number of tricks named, but good enough to justify putting up some kind of a fight, and to encourage the partner to do something which he would not attempt on his own cards.

A following bid that is not quite up to the safety limit is based on the theory that although the player on the right is strong enough for a free bid, the player who makes the following bid has a partner who has yet to speak, and who may have a pretty strong hand. It is to encourage such a partner to try for the contract that these defensive following bids are made, whereas he might prefer to say nothing and use his strength to save the game against the declarer's contract.

When the second hand passes the dealer's opening bid, that does not always mean that he was not strong enough for even a defensive call. He may be in the high grass for a shot at the declarer's contract and pretty sure of bringing it down.

When second hand passes without overcalling the dealer, there are three declarations open to the third hand. To pass, showing that the dealer's bid suits him, or he may

improve upon it by bidding more tricks in the same call or he may deny the dealer's declaration by shifting to a different one. The denial may actually be an improvement as when the dealer calls one club second hand passes and third hand bids no trump so as to try for game with a smaller number of tricks.

As a rule, a denial may be distinguished from an improved bid by its rank. To deny clubs with diamonds or diamonds with clubs, indicates weakness in the denied suit, because there is no object in shifting from a contract that requires five odd to go game to another equally difficult undertaking. Similarly to deny hearts with spades, or spades with hearts, indicates weakness in the denied suit unless the partner is strong enough to overcall his hand. A bid of two spades over partner's one heart, second hand passing, does not deny hearts, but shows a much greater strength in spades than would be indicated in hearts by a bid of one.

To deny a free bid of two in a playing suit, instead of assisting it, is invariably bad calling, because, as we shall see later the two bid, when one would have been enough, is aimed to inform that partner that the original caller is strong enough to be independent of his partner's possible weakness in that suit, and it also shows that the player who can afford to make a free bid of two in hearts or spades does not want his partner to shift, but to support it, if he is strong enough in other suits to do so, when it is overcalled.

When second hand interposes a following bid, third hand is not called upon to deny his partner's suit if weak in it. Passing will do that, but he may be strong enough to support the call over second hand's following bid, or even to shift to a better contract, or to double.

The decision as to whether to assist or shift when second hand puts in a bid is one of the most difficult in the game.

## BIDDING SITUATIONS

Successful bidding depends upon two things—knowing how much you can pay to secure the contract for your side, and estimating how much you will probably lose if it goes to your opponents. In some cases it will pay you to bid too much for the privilege of playing the hand, because you will still save money by keeping the other side from getting it. At other times you will lose by getting the contract, because you could have made more—in penalties—by letting the other side have it.

In some cases the opposing hands are too weak to offer any competition, and then again there are occasions when it shows good judgment to shut out the possibility of competition by making any opposing bid too expensive for the opponents to risk.

Situations arise in which it is clear that you cannot win the game, and your only object in going on with the bidding is to postpone the result by accepting a probable loss just to prevent the other side from scoring game when it looks as if they would do so.

If you cannot possibly win the game and are confident of saving it, it is usually better to let the other side try it, as you will then be playing for 50 points a trick over your "book," while they are playing for 8 or 9 only. To run the risk of reversing this position and being left to play a hand in which game is impossible shows bad judgment. The trifling score you might make is comparatively unimportant.

I collected 2 000 score sheets of ordinary rubbers played at the Knickerbocker Whist Club some years ago, and counted up the number of times that a partial score was necessary in order to win a game, as compared to the

## THE PERSONAL EQUATION

The tendency of the beginner is to regard all hands as presenting a problem in arithmetic and the decision as to whether or not to bid, either freely or defensively, whether to assist or deny, is settled by counting up the number of tricks it is apparently possible to win by appraising certain combinations of cards at their face value and to accept their adversaries' bids as estimated on the same principle. But this is only part of the problem.

This would work out very well at double dummy, where the four hands are absolutely known, but at the bridge table there is an important element which should always be taken into consideration and that is the personal equation of the partner and adversaries.

It is not always a question of what you understand certain bids to mean, but what do the players mean who make those bids. There is one class of players that will bid a heart with five to the ace king ten. Call them class A. There is another class that will bid a heart with six to the queen ten. Call them B. It is obviously important for you to know whether the partner sitting opposite you is in the A or B class.

My experience has been that the most successful players are not those who know how to value their hands and play their cards, so much as those who know how to value the bids and playing abilities of their partners and adversaries.

That is why a stranger is always at a great disadvantage in cutting into a rubber with three players who know one another's game pretty well. They have only the one thing to learn, the stranger's peculiarities. He has to learn the peculiarities of three different players under three

conditions as his partner, as his right-hand or as his left hand adversary, in forming two different partnerships among themselves

Some persons are so indifferent that they make no attempt to master the personal equations of those with whom they habitually play, while others carry it to the point of playing poker bridge

The best guide to a player's bidding qualifications is the exposed dummy hands. One should study them carefully, whether it is one's own dummy, or the adversary's. A brief examination of the distribution of suits and cards in a dummy hand will show you upon what strength or weakness that player bases his bids assists denials, shifts, take outs, or passes

You will see dummies that should have denied the partner's suit, that should have shifted to no trumps, that should have taken out a no trumper, that should have doubled the adversaries' last call, that should have passed instead of assisting. By making a note of these matters one is in a much better position to judge what to do when that player sits opposite you presently, or what to do in future if he is your partner now

Probably the most important single observation to make is a player's idea of assisting bids. If they are unjustified it will be well to be unusually cautious in your opening bids, or he will carry you beyond your depth if he meets with any opposing bids. Players who do not deny suits are also dangerous partners, but very satisfactory adversaries

Timid players, who refuse to bid on average hands, or who never call no trumps unless they have all four suits stopped, or who make no attempt at defensive following bids, must be encouraged by making up for their backwardness by being a little forward yourself. Fourth hand may often put in a bid after three passes that he would not

venture if he did not know that he had a timid backward bidder opposite him

If one or both your adversaries are backward bidders or timid in assisting or overcalling, you must be more cautious, or you may step into some penalties that will prove expensive

One of the important matters in connection with the average player's personal equation is his handling of no-trump situations. You can bid no-trumps on almost anything if you know the player on your left is in the habit of bidding freely against such calls

If you know your partner is in the habit of assisting no trumbers with nothing but one stopper in the adversary's following bid, you will do better to start with an approaching bid. If your partner is in the habit of doubling instead of assisting, you can often bid no-trumps on an ace and two hopes and leave the double in with very satisfactory results

## ATTACK AND DEFENCE

The cards dealt each player examines his hand hoping to find sufficient strength to justify him in making a bid or bids that shall arrive at the final declaration best fitted to his own and his partner's cards. This is the attacking part of the strategy of bidding as it is aimed at winning games and rubbers.

Just as it is frequently impossible for the commander of an army to know whether his plan of attack will result in victory or retreat so each partnership at the bridge table must be equally prepared to continue the attack or turn its attention to the defence.

The first bid made by the dealer is always attacking and it then becomes the duty of the adversaries to set up a counter attack or to prepare the best possible defence with a view either to preventing the other side from arriving at the best declaration or if this cannot be done to prevent that declaration from winning the game.

The preparation for this alternative is made by all good players who regard bids that are purely attacking having no defensive values as bad tactics. Players who persist in making such bids simply burn their bridges behind them.

When two equal forces are opposed in battle both equally well managed the one with the greater advantage in position wins. It is the same in bridge. The side that secures the more advantageous position such as being allowed to select its own trump suit and to play the twenty six cards of the combined hands as one can win probably double the number of tricks that it could win if it were on the defensive playing against a trump suit selected by their opponents.

This difference between the attacking and the defensive positions should be thoroughly understood by every player as it is the most important factor in estimating the trick taking value of his cards.

In bidding instead of naming the number of winning cards one holds as one would name the cash offered at an auction of old furniture one names the number of tricks that these cards will probably produce if the holder is allowed to play the hand with dummy for one's partner.

In order to do this intelligently one must understand the relation that certain combinations of cards bear to certain probabilities of trick winning according to whether one is playing the attack or on the defensive. It is easy to say that if you hold the ace king of one suit and the ace of another you should win three tricks but there are only eight aces and kings in the pack while there are thirteen tricks to be won in play. What cards are going to win the remaining five?

It has been found by careful examination of a large number of deals preserved in the trays of duplicate contests that the number of tricks won by the adversaries playing against sound suit contracts just about equals the number of aces and kings they held. Against bad bidding they will of course win more. Many players imagine that in addition to their aces and kings they win a considerable number of tricks with their small cards even when they are on the defensive. What they overlook is the number of aces and kings they carry home in various hands which balances the account.

If a careful count is kept of the results of 100 suit contracts recording the number of aces and kings held against those contracts in one column the number of tricks won in another column the totals at the end of 100 deals will be found to be about equal.

This would seem to indicate that there must be five tricks in every deal which are not won by aces and kings and that they fall into the hands of the declarer if his adversaries do not win any of them. Take this very ordinary distribution as an example



No 1

	1		♥	A K 10 6 4		
			♣	7 5 4		
			♦	A 10 2		
			♠	Q 7		
♥	8 7 2				♥	Q J
♣	K 6				♣	10 9 8
♦	K Q J 6 3				♦	9 5 4
♠	J 8 6				♠	A K 9 5 3
				<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Y A                  B Z</div>		
			♥	9 5 3		
			♣	A Q J 3 2		
			♦	8 7		
			♠	10 4 2		

If Y and Z play this hand at hearts, they win three odd, A and B winning four tricks with ace-king of spades, club king and diamond king. If A and B play the hand at spades, they will make three odd, Y and Z winning tricks with the ace of clubs, ace king of hearts and ace of diamonds.

That is to say each side, playing against the declaration, wins nothing but the four tricks represented by its aces and kings. All five of the tricks won with smaller cards are taken by the declarer and dummy.

Those tricks are won by the actual aces and kings, but take this distribution

No 2

		♥	A Q 5		
		♣	K 9 3		
		♦	J 9 7 6		
		♠	8 7 5		
♥	K 6			♥	8 7 3 2
♣	8 4			♣	Q J 10 6 2
♦	A K 5 4 2			♦	Q 10 8
♠	J 9 3 2			♠	Q
			<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Y A                  B Z</div>		
		♥	J 10 9 4		
		♣	A 7 5		
		♦	3		
		♠	A K 10 6 4		

## THE DOUBLE VALUATION SYSTEM

No one can aspire to being a good bridge player without having some systematic way of valuing a hand so as to arrive at its probable trick-taking strength in any of the three principal situations of the game for a bid on one's own cards, in support of the partner's bids, in opposition to the adversaries' bids.

The double valuation system as applied to suit bids, is based upon the fact that a hand which can win four odd and game will not find more than three sure tricks against it, on the average. If declarer and dummy hold five sure tricks they will probably win ten tricks instead of five, on the average.

This requires a player to have a clear idea of what can be classed as sure tricks, as there are many combinations of cards which are just as good as aces and kings, consequently we have to take into consideration the distribution of the smaller cards among the various suits.

Allowing for the fact that the majority of suit bids are made on five cards and that the partner will hold at least three small ones if the bid stands, the chances are decidedly against either adversary holding four, and that three rounds will exhaust their trumps. If the bid is made on only three or four in suit this probability of exhausting the adversaries does not hold good, and one cannot double the value of the high cards on account of their promoting the value of the small cards. If one could do so, four aces and four kings would be worth sixteen tricks.

That is why, in suit bids, the double valuation is restricted to long suits. The high cards or sure tricks in short suits must be regarded as defensive only, protecting the declarer against the suits in which the adversaries are probably long.

In the same way high cards which have been doubled in value for the basis of a free bid may lose that value when other bids are heard from. If you have bid a heart,

counting five to the ace king as good for four tricks and your partner denies that suit by shifting, your heart suit is no longer good for four tricks, even as trumps, because there are too many out against you in the hands of the adversaries. The same is true if hearts are not trumps, your adversaries getting the contract at spades or something. Your small hearts are worthless and prejudice the probability of your suit going round twice on account of its length. The same is true again if the adversaries name a suit in which you hold a sure trick. That value is defensive only, and cannot be doubled.

In no trumpers there is usually no suit longer than four cards, and it is impossible to judge what smaller cards, in what suits will be promoted by your higher cards, so the sure tricks in all the suits are doubled. The declarer's advantage lies, not in the possession of one long suit which is trumps, but in the management of two hands, the precise distribution and possibilities of which are known before he plays a card. The adversaries, on the other hand, are at the disadvantage of having to make a "blind lead" if there is no previous bidding to guide them, and with perfectly equal cards the declarer may sometimes be able to win the greater number of tricks. Take this example

No 4

	♥	9 6 3			
	♣	A J 10 2			
	♦	Q 8 4			
	♠	K 7 5			
♥	K 7 5			♥	Q 8 4
♣	Q 8 4			♣	K 7 5
♦	A J 10 2			♦	9 6 3
♠	9 6 3			♠	A J 10 2
	♥	A J 10 2			
	♣	9 6 3			
	♦	K 7 5			
	♠	Q 8 4			

These four hands are exactly alike in every respect each player having one of each denomination from the ace king down to the deuce. Each has a similar value in all four suits and the partner has the same complement in each suit.

No matter which of these four plays the hand at no-trump he will win eight tricks and if B holds up the ace of spades hoping to kill the king Z will make nine an average of twice as many as will be made by his adversaries with precisely the same cards.

All estimates of double valuation are of course based on averages. Take 100 deals in which the expectancy is to win eight tricks. Some may produce only six or seven others nine or ten but at the end of 100 trials the expectancy will be justified by the winning of a total of about 800 tricks.

The primary object in valuing a hand is to see if it is worth bidding on. If you wish to buy anything the first consideration is do you really want it the second is what does it cost the third is have you got the price? In bridge you always want to get the contract. It costs an undertaking to win at least seven tricks to get it. If you have the cards to produce seven tricks with your partner's expected assistance you have the price.

The player's average share of the 13 tricks to be played for would be  $3\frac{1}{4}$  but there is no such thing as either bidding or winning quarter tricks so he must have either above or below that average 3 or less 4 or more. If he has 4 exactly which is the lowest above average that he can hold there are 9 more to be played for and his partner's average share of those 9 tricks would be 3. Add these 3 to the bidder's 4 and we get 7 which is the number contracted for in any bid of one whether in suit or no trump.

If a player has more than his share such as 5 or 6 tricks that alone is no reason for bidding more than one because in such cases the partner's share will be less than 3. Cases

in which an opening bid should be more than one will be discussed later

This principle of bidding on more than averages being once understood, it will readily be seen that four "sure" tricks are not necessary, as two sure tricks will have the value of four if you get the contract, which is what you are bidding for. There are a number of combinations that are worth two sure tricks, besides both ace and king of one suit.

As we have seen in the chapter on "Attack and Defence," sure tricks double in value only on condition that you eventually get the contract with that suit for the trump, otherwise they retain their normal value and become defensive. But as two sure tricks are the minimum upon which any sound free bid of one should be made, the partner is assured of at least two tricks to assist him if he shifts to another suit, or to no trumps. He is also encouraged by the assurance of two tricks toward saving the game if the adversaries get the contract, a very important matter in many cases.

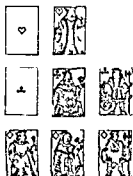
For the present we may pass over the distinction between hands which are proposed to play with a trump, and those that prefer no-trumps. In a trump suit length is the important thing, whereas in no trumps diffused strength in high cards in several short or medium suits is the main consideration. This matter of distribution will be fully dealt with in the chapter devoted to that subject.

Taking up the values of high cards, apart from the length of the suit we get a double valuation which is designed to show as quickly and simply as possible whether or not the hand contains the four tricks—or two sure tricks—necessary for a free bid.

There are nine combinations of high cards which every

player should memorize so as to translate any one of them into its trick taking value at sight

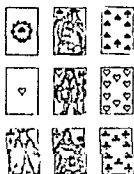
Beginning with the three which have the required four values all in the same suit we have these



Good for  
4 tricks

The hearts are obviously good for two sure tricks, double it and call it four. In clubs only one trick can be lost to the king leaving two sure double it and call it four. In diamonds only one trick can be lost to the ace leaving two sure double it and call it four.

There are three combinations which have been found by experience to yield one sure trick and about half the time to yield a second. That is one sure and one probable. These are



Good for  
3 tricks

These may be more readily remembered by observing that they each contain a ten

There are four combinations that are rated as worth only one sure trick



Good for  
2 tricks

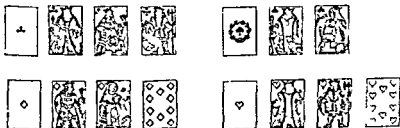
Some players estimate ace queen suits as worth more than one sure trick, but analysis has shown that they do not average three tricks won in play, and are therefore rated on the safe side, as one sure trick, especially in defence

There are a number of combinations that are not sure tricks, but that stand to win a trick about half the time



Good for  
1 trick

Combinations of greater value than any of these, such as



are sometimes valued at five tricks if there are at least five cards in the suit, but they are seldom worth more than

## THE CULBERTSON SYSTEM

A good many years ago W H Whitfield then card editor of the *London Field* made an exhaustive examination of the probable value of certain high cards and of trumps both practically and as confirmed by mathematical calculations. Among other things he found that the so called Robertson Rule for getting at the value of a hand by giving arbitrary numerical values to the high cards—ace 7, king 5, queen 3, jack 2 and ten 1—was unbalanced as two queens are almost as good as an ace, and five aces 35, are certainly better than seven kings, 35.

But the most interesting of his discoveries was the value of extra length in the trump suit, and his reducing it to a formula. Compare these two hands:

♥ A K Q 6 4 2  
 ♣ 3 2  
 ♦ J 9 4  
 ♠ 6 5

♥ A K Q 6 4  
 ♣ A 3 2  
 ♦ J 9 4  
 ♠ 6 5

There are seven losing cards in each of these hands. In the second example there is a trump less but its place is taken by the ace of clubs. Then each trump beyond the normal five for a bid is as good as an ace—provided that suit is the final selection for the trump. The same was shown to be true in less degree of extra length in plain suits, when defended by a strong trump suit. Therein lies the strength of "two-suiters."

It is upon this consideration of distribution that another system of arriving at the value of a hand for bidding purposes, differing widely from the Double Valuation system, has been suggested by Ely Culbertson, of the Knickerbocker Whist Club, New York, whose reputation as a successful player in all kinds of competition needs no amplification here.

The chief difference between



sure tricks are never doubled in value and that certain separated high cards have the same value as if in one suit. For example the king and queen of hearts have no more value than the king of hearts and queen of spades. The queen of clubs and jack of diamonds are just as good as the queen jack of clubs.

Another important difference is the value attached to more than average numbers of small cards in any and all suits this value being doubled in the trump suit.

Owing to its complications I have found this system not as well suited to the beginner or average player as the Double Valuation system but it is undoubtedly largely used by experts. One peculiarity is the attention paid to probable tricks which are rated at a half to be turned into a whole trick at a pinch if the bidding competition demands it when there is a half in the total value of the hand. Otherwise the halves go to make up whole tricks by adding them together.

The standard for suit bids is the same four tricks at least two of them being relied upon for defence. The others may be small cards that have no defensive value. It is also assumed that there shall be at least four cards in any suit that is named in the hope of its being selected as the trump.

The Culbertson system proceeds on the principle that as tricks are won in three ways by the high cards in any suits by small cards in long suits and by dummy's ability to trump suits in which dummy is short all three of these shall be taken into account in the valuation of the hands.

The ace and king of the same suit are worth two tricks. [Nothing is said about ace-queen jack or king queen jack and those values must be inferred.]

There are three combinations that are rated

No 3 has a strong suit, with a sure trick outside

No 4 has two equally strong suits

No 5 has three suits "stopped" or protected

No 6 has all four suits protected, or stopped

Information as to which class any hand belongs is conveyed to the partner by free bids, rebids, and shifts.

No 1, for instance, would be a pass, both as a free bid and as an assist

No 2 is a heart bid, with nothing more to say, except perhaps to support the partner if he shifts to spades or clubs

No 3 is a spade call to start with, prepared to rebid if necessary to show the outside trick

No 4 is a two-suiter, either hearts or spades being a sound bid, but the higher ranking suit should be first named

No 5 may be either a no trumper, or may start with an "approaching bid" in clubs, hoping to hear from the playing suits, by making it cheap to overcall

No 6 is a no trumper, prepared to support any take out by the partner

The refusal to go further with No 2 classifies that hand as different from No 3 in which the spades would be rebid. In No 4, the bidding of the higher ranking suit, spades, before calling the hearts, classifies that hand as containing two equally sound free bids, because if the spades were not a sound free bid, perhaps containing nothing but length, five or six cards, the hearts would be called first. The spades would become a "secondary bid"

If No 5 is started with an approaching bid, one club, and the partner calls hearts, it is a no trumper to deny the hearts, but disclosing the strength in both spades and diamonds

In No 6, anything the partner calls would be left in and

is obviously useless This is especially true of the dummy's cards

What is true of the hand of one player may not be true of his partner's hand. Distribution may suggest a suit bid to one and no trumps to the other or no trumps to the first bidder and a shift to a suit by his partner.

The selection of a suit for the trump or the decision to bid no trumps depends on the distribution of the suits more than on the distribution of the high cards.

The most common distributions are those in which the longest suit in the hands of any of the four players is one of 4, 5 or 6 cards, there being only about 4 times in 100 in which a player will have seven or more of a suit as against 96 times in which he will hold six or less.

For convenience of reference the probability frequency of each of the more common distributions in 1 000 deals is given in the following table and the percentage shown. Any of the four players may hold the long end of a suit and the three remaining distributions may fall in six different

5	4	3	1	ways as shown in the margin supposing that
5	4	1	3	it is the dealer who has the five cards
5	3	4	1	This distribution occurs about 130 times
5	3	1	4	in 1 000 deals but as any of the four might
5	1	3	4	be the one to get the five cards we get four
5	1	4	3	times six or twenty four ways in which a
				suit that fell in some variation of 5 4 3 1

might be distributed

In 1 000 deals there should be about 350 distributions in which no player would hold more than four cards 444 in which no player holds more than five and 164 in which no player holds more than six. The remaining 42 are freaks.

The distributions and percentage of frequency are given in the following table

*Govindlal Shrivastava*



If we make a horizontal diagram of the distribution of the four suits in the hand of each player, we get this

The Players	Z	A	Y	B
Z's heart suit	5	3	3	2
A's diamonds	3	4	3	3
Y's club suit	3	3	4	3
B's spade suit	2	3	3	5

Reading the distribution of the 13 hearts from left to right, 5 3 3 2, we find that it exactly agrees with the distribution of the four suits in Z's hand, 5 hearts, 3 clubs, 3 diamonds and 2 spades

The same is true of A's longest suit, diamonds. His hand shows the distribution of the suits to be 3 4 3 3, and that agrees with the distribution of the 13 diamonds among the hands of Z, A, Y and B. The same agreement will be found for Y's clubs and B's spades. In each case the distribution of the 13 cards belonging to each player's longest suit agrees with the distribution of the four different suits in the player's own hand.

While this agreement in distribution is very common, it is not by any means universal. One may deal a number of hands and among them find some in which the correspondence between the distribution of some suit, and of the suits in some player's hand, will agree. Only two or three suits may so agree, but it is very rarely that there is no such agreement.

A professor of mathematics explains this by the fact that the probability of some suit's being distributed, let us say, 5 3 3 2, and the probability that some player holds a 5 3 3 2 distribution, is the same, 155 times in 1,000 deals.

But the fact remains that no one, not even Mr Culbertson, has yet been able to give us any workable theory that can be practically applied at the bridge table with a view to

taking advantage of this peculiarity, either in the bidding or in the play, so that, for the present at least, it must remain simply a curiosity of the game

Probably the most important consideration in connection with suit distribution is the player's own hand, particularly in distinguishing suit bids from no-trumpers. The trumps in the hand of the declarer are counted at their full value, regardless of the manner in which they take tricks. This will be obvious if we consider that if he holds the five top honours he will take five tricks, whether he leads trumps five times or uses two or three of them for ruffing.

When the bidder has short and unprotected suits, he avoids no trump bids, as he feels the want of a trump suit to defend himself against those short suits if they happen to be long and strong in the hands of his adversaries. As four out of five of all the hands that have a short suit, less than three cards, have a suit of five or more cards, this long suit is invariably named in free bids. This is bidding on distribution.

When there is no such short suit, there can be no suit of five cards, and a trump suit cannot be of any possible use, so the player's attention is called to the possibility of playing the hand without a trump. The advisability of so doing is based on the high cards in at least three suits. Again we find the bidding based on distribution, this time of the high cards as well as of the suits. Failing sufficient high card distribution in three suits the player must either pick out some suit that is strong enough for an 'approaching bid,' or pass. All helping suit bids are in a sense approaching bids. Bids on four cards in the playing suits may be taken either way.

Crossing over the table to the partner's hand, we find the same necessity for considering the distribution of both suits and high cards. The number of cards held in the suit

proposed by the dealer as the trump must decide whether to support that suit or deny it and the distribution of the high cards must decide whether or not to assist or shift.

One of the leading principles in modern bidding especially with regard to the partner's hand is based on the apparently obvious fact to which no text book so far has called special attention that

Trumps are of no use to a player who cannot trump anything.

If trumps are valuable, they should be available for the third round at the latest. The game is practically settled by the time any one gets a chance to trump a fourth round of a suit. If the partner cannot trump anything until the fourth round, his trumps have length value only, in making it probable that the adversaries will be easily exhausted.

Having no short suit, he cannot have any five card suit, and the same proposition presents itself with regard to the choice between playing the hand with a trump or without.

In the example hand last given, for instance, suppose Z deals and bids a heart, which he did at each of nine tables, A passes, and the average player imagines he has excellent support for his partner's heart call, and says "no bid." That is what happened at every table and all those who played Z's cards failed to go game, as three diamonds and a spade or a club must be won by A and B. Most of the players seem to have led a trump after winning the third diamond. With his distribution trumps are of no use to B, as he cannot trump anything, often a good reason for leading them, just as it is an excellent rule for the declarer to lead trumps when dummy cannot trump anything, and he does not want to be forced.

A player who understands this rule of distribution, holding Y's cards should see that as trumps were of no use to him and he had two suits other than hearts protected

he should have bid no trumps, so as to make the tricks worth 10 instead of 8, and to go game with a trick less

This is a game hand at no trumps for Y, even if B leads diamonds on account of the three touching honours. If B starts with a spade, Y makes four odd. If Z's hand had not been suited to no-trump distribution, perhaps containing a singleton and six hearts, he could have gone back to two hearts with confidence, knowing he would find a powerful dummy opposite him

Sometimes there is a game in the suit bid, but a better score at no trumps on the take-out. Here is an example

No 7

7		♥ A J	
		♣ A J 10 4 2	
		♦ K 8 4	
		♠ A K 10	
♥ 9 7 4		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;">Y A      B Z</div>	♥ 8 6 3
♣ 7 3			♣ 9 5
♦ Q J 10 5			♦ A 7 3
♠ 8 6 5 2			♠ Q J 9 7 3
	♥ K Q 10 5 2		
	♣ K Q 8 6		
	♦ 9 6 2		
	♠ 4		

Z deals and bids a heart, which A passes. Y cannot trump anything and also knows that to justify a heart bid without ace and jack his partner must have had a sure trick outside to bring his values up to four. This trick must be ace of diamonds, or king queen of clubs, so Y bids no-trump, which has the additional advantage that if Z's trick is not the ace of diamonds, Y's king cannot be led through.

At no-trumps Y makes a little slam, five hearts, five clubs and the two spades. At one table, when B led a





Even with five cards of a strong playing suit some players will not take out a no-trumper if that suit cannot be used to trump anything until the third round. Take this example ♠

No 9

♥ A K 10 6 4  
 ♣ 6 4 2  
 ♦ J 10 8  
 ♠ Q 3

♥ Q 9 2

♣ 8 7

♦ A 9

♠ J 10 9 8 5 4

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ J 8

♣ K J 10 9 5

♦ 7 6 4 2

♠ 6 2

♥ 7 5 3

♣ A Q 3

♦ K 9 5 3

♠ A K 7

Z deals and bids no-trump. If Y takes out with two hearts the result of the play is the same at either contract, four odd. At no-trumps this is 40 and 30 at hearts 32 and 16.

We shall now see how this question of distribution affects all kinds of bids, rebids, shifts and take-outs in the partner's hand.

The most important consideration in the partner's hand is the distribution of the trump suit in connection with the high-card values in the plain suits. Dummy's trumps have a value in two ways: their number may make it more probable that the adversary's trumps will be easily taken out, or the shortness in plain suits may make them available for ruffing. These values have already been stated in connection with the Culbertson system and it is the same in the duplicate-valuation system.

Supposing that the first call is a free bid by the dealer

and there is no intervening bid by second hand it becomes the duty of the dealer's partner to respond in one of three ways to deny the suit to shift or to pass. These responses are governed by distribution both of suits and high cards.

If the bid is one in any suit the partner is expected to hold at least three small cards of that suit or as good as the queen and one small. This holding is considered enough to fulfil the bidder's expectation of making his four tricks. Failing this support outside strength is no excuse for leaving the bidder in the lurch with perhaps four or more trumps against him in one hand and the suit should be promptly denied.

Many players consider this denial of supreme importance because of the modern tendency to bid on four card suits. The general rule is to deny the suit with anything that would be a fair defensive bid against the adversary's call if an adversary dealt and bid and you sat second hand. Some go much further than that and will deny with any five card suit or the higher ranking of two four card suits provided there is a good honour at the top of it.

Applying the same principle to no-trumpers which are bid on high card distribution and not on long suits, if a minimum of three cards is expected to support an average suit bid on five cards a minimum of three tricks should be expected to support a no trump bid on five tricks.

If this is lacking the no trumper should be warned that it will not find in dummy the average support in high cards just as the suit bid should be warned that it will not find the average support in that suit.

In spite of the logic of the situation many players have a peculiar objection to taking their partners out of no trumps and thousands of points are lost in this manner which might have been saved by judicious denials.

The following are take-outs, the dealer bidding no-trumps and second hand passing

♥ Q J 10 \ \  
 ♣ \ \  
 ♦ A \ \ \  
 ♠ \ \

Two hearts

♥ \ \ \  
 ♣ Q 10 \ \ \  
 ♦ \ \ \  
 ♠ \ \

Two clubs

♥ Q J \  
 ♣ \ \  
 ♦ A \ \  
 ♠ A K Q \ \

Three spades

In the first of these the two card suits are unfavourable no trump distributions. The second example is far below average in high cards necessary to support a no-trumper. The third is an example of overcalling a take-out to show tricks outside the suit named. This is on the same principle as rebidding a hand; but in this case it shows the partner that he may safely return to no trumps if he is shy of spades.

It is worthy of note that this situation—the dealer having only two small spades—is impossible under the approaching method of bidding, and overcalling the spades shows that it is not a rescue or denial, but based on unusual strength in spades, with at least one sure trick outside and another suit stopped. A longer spade suit would be quite willing to go to four, if the no-trumper denied the suit.

When the first free bid is two or more in a playing suit, it shows that the distribution in the player's hand is such that he does not care if the partner has only one or two of the suit, as he has enough for both. In such cases there is no necessity to deny the suit. If it is overcalled, the partner can assist on outside tricks, if he has enough of them, but should never show what he is assisting on, as that would disclose to the adversaries where that strength lay, which does not interest the original caller. All he wants to know is that you have assisting strength.

## VALUING THE HANDS

Confining our attention for the present to what are known as "free bids," which are those made by the dealer or by second hand if the dealer passes, and disregarding bids made by third or fourth hand after two or three passes, we find such free bids are based upon the principle that they shall show something to the partner, something that shall survive totally regardless of the final result of the auction.

This sets the double standard for all free bids which is to combine a suggestion as to the trump suit with a guarantee that you are able to win a certain number of tricks whether that suit is eventually selected for the trump or not.

This has fixed by all good players as a minimum of two sure tricks, and is based on the qualification that a sure trick is something that will win the first or the second round of a suit no matter who leads it. The last qualification is important. Aces, and king-queen suits are the only ones that meet this condition, queens, jacks and tens having no value except in combination with higher cards. Even a suit of king jack ten is not a sure trick, as it may be led through twice. The fact that the partner probably has ace or queen once in three times does not alter the fact that the holder of the king jack ten cannot himself be sure of winning the first or second round no matter who leads the suit.

It does not matter what suit is first named, one part of this original call remains—the promise to take at least two tricks no matter what the final declaration may be or who gets the contract.

In order to understand how the combined distribution of suits and high cards controls free bids, here are a few

examples, with notes on the manner in which their value is ascertained

♥	K Q \	♥	K Q x \	♥	K Q x x \
♣	A J x \ x	♣	A J x \	♣	A J x
♦	x \	♦	\ x	♦	x x
♠	10 \ x	♠	10 x x	♠	10 x \

In the first example we get 4 tricks by the double valuation system by doubling the sure tricks in hearts and clubs. By the Culbertson system these are worth only one each, the two extra length club tricks 2 more. In both systems the valuation is based on naming the long suit, five cards, so it is a club bid.

In the second example we have taken away a club and added a small heart. Under the Culbertson system the hand is now worth  $3\frac{1}{2}$  tricks only, because although the extra length card in the suit that might be named is worth 1, the extra long card in the other suit is worth only a  $\frac{1}{2}$ . In the double valuation system the hand is still 4 tricks, but only for a bid in the helping suit, clubs.

In the third example we have shifted another small card from the clubs to the hearts. Now this is a heart call on 4 tricks with either system of valuation. Two sure tricks, one in each suit, are values that will survive regardless of the final declaration.

In each of these cases it will be observed that both the sure tricks are not in the same suit. In many cases the partner can tell by his own holding where the outside trick lies.

Many advanced players bid freely on long suits that have no sure trick at the top, provided they have what they call "*compensating values*" in other suits. In such cases they usually hold more than 4 tricks. Except in rare instances, especially such hands as preclude the

probability of any other player at the table having enough to make a call of any kind, I believe it better for the free bid to name one of the compensating suits if it is a helping suit. This is especially needful for beginners, in order to retain the confidence of the partner that he will find at least one sure trick in the suit named if he leads it. Take these examples, all cards smaller than the ten being 'x'

♥	K 10 x x x	♥	Q J x x x	♥	Q x x x x x
♣	x x x	♣	A J x x	♣	A J x
♦	A K x	♦	A 10	♦	A 10
♠	x x	♠	x x	♠	x x

In the first example there are  $4\frac{1}{2}$  or 5 tricks by either system of valuation, with hearts as trumps. But if you bid a heart and the adversaries get the contract your partner may double on the supposition that you can stop the heart suit, or he may lead a heart, fully expecting you to take the trick, and it may be too late to take advantage of your winning diamonds when he finds out where your real strength lies.

In the second example we have two sure tricks and 4 or  $4\frac{1}{2}$  values, provided hearts are trumps, but it is safer to start with the approaching bid, one club, in order to uncover the spade situation if possible. The hand is still worth four tricks by either system, if clubs are called.

In the third example we get three extra tricks in hearts if hearts prove to be the trump suit, and two aces, five tricks. With such length many players are afraid to bid the short helping suit, clubs, to show the defensive strength for fear of being left in. Others advocate the club because it is cheap for other players to overcall it. With nine aces, kings and queen round the table somewhere, there certainly should be some bidding against the club. It will then be time enough to bid the hearts as a secondary bid, and the

partner will not be deceived. The partner would have to provide at least five tricks to go game in hearts from a love score.

When we come to hands that contain no good playing suit of five cards the decision is often between a helping suit and no trumps. One peculiarity of the Culbertson system is that it continually undervalues no-trumpers when compared with the double valuation system. This is because all the suits are plain suits in a no-trumper, and the value of extra small cards is only  $\frac{1}{2}$  a trick. As the high card values remain the same, the tendency is to underestimate the total, which leads to the liberal employment of "approaching bids," preferably in the helping suits, for many hands that are good no-trumpers to the average player.

It has been remarked that the double valuation system reverses the Culbertson system in valuing no-trumpers, as it counts all high cards as promoting cards for all the small cards, without picking out any one suit. This leads to the impossibility of saying that four aces and four kings are worth sixteen tricks. Three aces and three kings of the same suits should be worth twelve tricks, yet they may lose the odd.

I have been over this situation very carefully, and in spite of this apparent absurdity, I am convinced that the double valuation system is better than any of the pip-counting systems, such as the Robertson Rule, that have been designed to value no-trumpers. I have come to this conclusion after analysing 1,000 free bids of no trumps based on double valuation, and finding them to come within 5 per cent of the truth. That is to say, if the double valuation says that in 1,000 deals the predicated value of the combined hands is 8,000 tricks, the number of tricks won in actual play of those hands will be within



5 per cent of that figure No pip-counting system will do that

The reason I have found to be this The great majority of no-trump hands are played on a contract of one or two This means that they are never called upon to make any of the absurd bids that are suggested by such valuations as twelve or sixteen tricks When such freak overvaluations are held in rare instances, they are compensated for in the numerous cases in which smaller valuations produce more than the predicted number of tricks

Conservative players do not bid no-trumps on four tricks, although that is enough for a suit call This is because in a no-trumper the adversaries get the jump on you with the first lead of their long suit, and you have no trump suit to stop it if they establish the dregs of it The examination of 1,000 free no-trump bids showed the average to be worth seven tricks, and the minimum of safety, five tricks Below that, approaching bids were invariably safer Here are some examples of valuation

♥ A J 10 x	♥ A J 10 x	♥ A J 10 x
♣ A x x	♣ A x x x	♣ A x x x $\frac{1}{2}$
♦ K Q x	♦ K Q x	♦ K Q x x
♠ x x x	♠ x x	♠ x

Counting the first of these at double values, we get 7 tricks 3 in hearts, 2 each in clubs and diamonds By the Culbertson system, only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in hearts (if hearts are trumps,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  for the A J 10, and 1 for the extra heart), and the sure tricks in clubs and diamonds At no-trumps, the extra heart becomes a plain suit, worth a  $\frac{1}{2}$  only This would be a no-trumper under either system, on account of the distribution, a trump suit being of no value when one cannot trump anything

In the second example there is not only the danger but

the probability that the spade suit will be opened against the no trump call and one heart is the safer free bid or the approaching bid of one club hoping to hear from the spade suit in the bidding Double value 5 tricks Culbertson 5 also

In the third example there is no choice between a suit and no trumps as the singleton bars the no trump call but it is a better heart than club Double value 5 tricks Culbertson  $5\frac{1}{2}$

There are many good players who will not bid no trumps with a two card suit in hand unless it is stopped with ace or king queen They prefer the approaching bid

♥ A Q 10  
 ♣ A 10 x x  
 ♦ K x  
 ♠ J 10 9 x

♥ A K x x  
 ♣ K 10  
 ♦ 10 x x x  
 ♠ A x x

♥ A  
 ♣ Q J x x  
 ♦ K J x x  
 ♠ K Q 10 x

In the first example we find four tricks As the Culbertson system makes no deductions for suits of less than three this would be an approaching club bid Under the double-valuation system the hand is worth 6 tricks 3 in hearts 2 in clubs 1 in diamonds and is a good no trumper with all four suits stopped

In the second example we get 7 tricks at double valuation 4 in hearts 1 in clubs 2 in spades Culbertson gets  $4\frac{1}{2}$  tricks Both short suits are vulnerable to attack and the safer call is one heart not no trump Culbertson value then 5 tricks

In the third example we find the standard objection to a no trumper the singleton Even if the suit is stopped it can neither be further defended nor led again The correct bid on these 5 or  $5\frac{1}{2}$  values is one spade

The last two calls being in major suits are still classed as approaching bids because that suit may be denied by

the partner with a suit which justifies a shift to no trumps

Here are three hands, none of which is worth more than 3 tricks on the Culbertson system as no trumpers

♥ A \	♥ K \	♥ K Q \
♣ Q J 10 \	♣ K 10 x \	♣ Q \
♦ K x x	♦ K J x x	♦ Q 10 x x x
♠ K x x x	♠ A x x	♠ A x x

Probably nine players out of ten would bid no trump on the first of these but if it is counted up it is good for only four tricks on the double valuation system. The player who actually held this hand bid a club the suit he wanted led or would lead before losing his re entries. The second example is a no trumper under double valuation, with 5 tricks. A Culbertson player would probably bid a club making it cheap to overcall.

The third example is good for only four tricks at double values, and is a bad diamond call, with no sure trick in that suit. It is a toss up between a pass and no trump, with odds on the pass.

If the values are well distributed, and the only short suit in the hand is two cards stopped by ace, or king-queen, no-trump is better than a suit call, because there is nothing the player can trump and a trump suit is useless. Dummy may, of course, alter this situation by a take out denying no trump distribution.

♥ A Q	♥ A Q	♥ 10 x x x
♣ A x x x	♣ Q 10 \	♣ K 10 x x
♦ J 10 \	♦ K J 10 x \	♦ A K
♠ K J x x	♠ K J x	♠ A Q \

In the first example, 4½ tricks by Culbertson's system, 5 by the other, there is no good approaching bid and the spades are useless as trumps to protect the diamond suit, so it would be a no-trumper. In the second example,



contract for two or three tricks. If he bids two hearts, he cannot win the game. The no-trump bid keeps B quiet.

When Z began with one club A bid a heart, and if left to play it made three odd. This happened at several tables. But when B was a player that understood the theory of distribution he took out the heart bid with one no trump and won the game. B could not well make a bid of two no trumps over Z's original no-trump call.

Many good players object to the exaggerated estimates placed on the high cards that are scattered through some no trump hands but their promoting power seems to justify this estimate in many cases. Take the following distribution as an example and compare the various estimates with the result.

No 12

♥ Q 3  
♣ A K 3  
♦ J 10 7 6 4  
♠ Q 9 6

♥	A 10 9 7 4
♣	J 10 4 2
♦	K 5
♠	J 10

	Y	
A		B
	7	

♥ J 6 2  
♣ 9 8  
♦ Q 8 2  
♠ K 8 5 4 2

♥	K 8 5
♣	Q 7 6 5
♦	A 9 3
♠	A 7 3

Counted at double valuation Z has five tricks and all four suits stopped Culbertson's valuation is only 3½ tricks and not good enough for even an approaching bid If A bids hearts Y will sit tight to save the game his partner having made no bid The result is that A makes his contract one heart

If Z bids no trump A says nothing and leads a small heart. When dummy goes down, Z counts his two sure tricks in clubs as worth four, added to his own five makes nine, and nine tricks is game, but Z makes four odd by careful play against the best possible defence.

Dummy wins the heart lead with the queen and plays the diamond jack for the finesse. A wins, with the king. The best chance to get a heart lead through Z's king is the spade jack, which dummy covers with the imperfect fourchette, queen nine. The king falls to the ace. A small club puts dummy in with the king to lead a small diamond, Z finessing the nine, and leading the ace to drop the queen.

A can read Z for the club queen, to justify his no trump call, and when B drops the eight, Z is marked with six and seven. To prevent Z from making a fourth club trick, or dummy from making the nine of spades, A must discard hearts and continue to discard hearts on the dummy's long diamonds until he is down to the ace.

The situation is clear to Z when dummy wins the second club lead with the ace, after establishing the diamonds. Dummy's two sure club tricks were valued at four, and they win four—two top clubs, and two small diamonds promoted and brought into play by the ace of clubs. Without that trick the diamonds die.

Z can see that A is guarding the clubs, as the eight and nine fell from B. The ten of spades is also marked, and he led his fourth best heart, shedding the four nine and ten, so he holds the ace alone. This makes it easy for dummy to lead the small heart, B puts on the jack and Z ducks with the eight, having shed both his spades on the diamonds. A makes the ace of hearts and ten of spades. *Z makes the club queen and heart king, four odd.*

Take a much stronger hand and count it up

No 11

♥ A Q 9 3  
 ♣ 9 7 3  
 ♦ 8 4  
 ♠ Q 7 5 2

♥ K 8 4  
 ♣ 6 2  
 ♦ K Q J 5 3  
 ♠ K J 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ J 10 6 2  
 ♣ J 10 8 4  
 ♦ 7 2  
 ♠ 10 9 6

♥ 7 5  
 ♣ A K Q 5  
 ♦ A 10 9 6  
 ♠ A 8 4

Z deals and counts up his hand as worth eight tricks on the double-valuation system. On the Culbertson system five only and probably an approaching club bid on account of the short heart suit. In double valuation dummy cards are worth two tricks, total for the combined hands ten. Culbertson system dummy two-and-a-half tricks total seven and a half at no-trumps.

Played at no-trumps, Z makes ten tricks, by finessing both hearts and spades. 3 spades 3 clubs 2 hearts and 2 diamonds. Few persons realize the promoting power of high cards in establishing and bringing in small cards of various suits. It may be noted that the adversaries make nothing but the three tricks represented by their three kings. They lose the heart king but make two diamonds.

Now that we have seen how hands are valued, we shall turn our attention to the bidding beginning with free bids in suit.

## PLAYING AND HELPING SUITS

I have always maintained that the terms "major and minor suits" do not properly differentiate the respective value of hearts and spades as compared to clubs and diamonds. While it is not particularly difficult to make four odd and game in hearts or spades, five odd in clubs or diamonds is a different matter. No good player will deliberately bid one club or one diamond with the idea of insisting on that suit for the trump unless he holds strength enough to bid four or five, if pushed to it.

A bid of one in hearts or spades suggests that the bidder would like that suit to be the trump, and hopes it will be left in, but a bid of one club or diamond always has back of it the hope that the partner will be able to do something better, or has back of it a good secondary bid in hearts or spades.

If bids of hearts or spades are made hoping that the hand will be played with the named suit for the trump, then these should be called "Playing Suits." On the other hand, if clubs or diamonds are usually bid in the hope that the strength shown will encourage the partner to do something better by offering a certain amount of help they should be called "Helping Suits," and they will be so referred to in the following pages.

There are occasional hands which are too strong to pass and which suggest that if some kind of a bid is not made on them no one else will be strong enough to start the auction. It is conceded that in such cases one may depart from the rule that there must be at least a trick at the head of the suit named, that deliberate temporary deception of the partner being



by the unusual distribution of outside strength For example

♥ Q 10 6 4 2	♥ K Q 10	♥ A K Q
♣ K Q 10	♣ Q 10 6 4 2	♣ K 5
♦ Q J 10	♦ Q J 10	♦ K 7
♠ A K	♠ A K	♠ 10 8 6 5 4 2

Many players will bid a heart on the first of these in preference to no-trumps, but no good player would think of bidding a club on the second example, as it would almost certainly be left in. In the third example, there is no legitimate call but one spade. The hand is worth an average of six tricks if partner has three spades of any size.

This has led to the rule that while a playing suit may be bid originally without a sure trick in it, helping suits must never be so bid as the help they promise is not there. Given two sure tricks, such as the ace of clubs or diamonds and another ace anywhere, if the ace named is bid, the other ace will produce the second trick promised, and the partner's confidence is retained.

If the office of a helping suit is to make tricks apart from the trump suit, and regardless of which side gets the contract the shorter the helping suit is the better, because it has so much the better chance to go round twice without being trumped.

The danger of being left to play the hand with a short helping suit is not worth considering, although it is the bugaboo of all timid players. If it is left in, neither partner nor adversaries having anything better to suggest, it is probably the best contract for the combined hands, or the adversaries have passed up a chance for game. No matter how much the adversaries penalize you, remember that they can never win games or rubbers unless they play

*Govindlal Shrivda*

*Motilal, Bombay*

the hand. Statistics on this point show that it is not more than once in fifty times that a one trick bid in a helping suit will be left in and penalized.

Personally I have never been afraid to bid a short helping suit if it shows two sure tricks or better for assistance or defence, but I prefer to have both tricks in the same suit, ace and king. To pass up hands that contain two or more sure tricks is losing opportunities and discouraging the partner. Here is an extreme example which might be called a freak, but it illustrates the principle.

No 14

♥ J 9  
 ♣ 9 8 6 2  
 ♦ A Q 10 9  
 ♠ 8 7 5

♥ A Q  
 ♣ K Q 10  
 ♦ K J  
 ♠ K Q J 10 9 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 10 7 6 5  
 ♣ J 7 5 4 3  
 ♦ 5 4 3  
 ♠ 6

♥ K 8 4 3 2  
 ♣ A  
 ♦ 8 7 6 2  
 ♠ A 4 2

Z dealt and at eight tables passed, at four he bid one heart. In each case A bid three spades. If Z makes no bid Y leads ace and another diamond, and A wins the game by getting out the trumps, establishing the jack of clubs for a re-entry and leading a heart from dummy.

When Z bids a heart, Y leads that suit and later makes two diamonds, saving the game, but giving A his contract. At one table Y thought it best to make his ace of diamonds before leading the heart, and it cost him the game.

At the one table at which Z bid one club, to indicate his two tricks for defence, he accomplished a double duty for

## SUIT BIDS

It is extremely difficult to impress upon some persons that naming a suit in the bidding does not make it the trump, but simply suggests that you would like to have that suit for the trump. The decision as to what shall be the trump in any hand is not settled by the initial bid, but by the final bid, and what might suit your hand may not meet with the approval of the other players, not even your partner.

The bidding is not to settle what best suits your individual hand, unless you can "pre-empt" by bidding so high that no one is able to overcall you, such as three spades, four hearts, or five diamonds. The usual object is to arrive at the best final bid for the combined hands, whether that declaration is to pass and let the other side play it, or to double them and play for penalties, or to get the contract yourselves with as little risk as possible.

This naturally requires the partners thoroughly to understand each other's calls, and I have always insisted that it does not matter much what system two partners adopt, if they understand it. If each knows a system for valuing hands for calling, and knows how to apply that system to any situation, the only question is: does the partner also understand it? If the partner understands it, it is perfect and they should never change it. It does not matter how "rotten" other players may tell them their system is, the perfect mutual understanding between them as partners will more than compensate for any defects in the system itself. Most of the losses at bridge that could have been avoided are due to misunderstandings.

The trouble with many players is that they have no definite reliable system of their own, and their partners are continually put to a guess as to what certain declarations mean. *The strength of a partnership is always its weakest*

number. When four players form a table, none of them knowing much about the game, it is as fair for one side as the other.

Many persons have asked me what is the use of one's learning the best methods of declaring and the latest conventions of the play, if those with whom you play do not understand them. My answer to this is always another question. Which would you rather be, the best player at the table or one of four dubs? As pointed out in the chapter on personal equations, a good player can soon mark down the peculiarities of the others at the table and will always have the advantage of the confidence of his partner, who responds to the situation when sitting opposite one whom he knows to be a fine player.

The majority of the hands dealt start with a suit bid, but a large number are not worth a free bid of any kind. I knew a very good player who never sorted his hand until he had run through it to see if he had enough aces and kings to justify a bid. If not, he passed without waiting to sort his cards. He told me that the time wasted by some players in sorting a hand that a glance should have told them could not by any possibility be worth a bid, was enough to play an extra rubber every three hours.

The first consideration in any hand is the distribution of the high cards. It may be set down as an axiom that no hand is worth a free bid that does not contain at least one ace and one king or two kings. Queens, jacks and tens are simply fillers.

After sorting the hand into suits, the next question is the distribution of those suits with regard to the number in each. As the majority of all the hands dealt, 650 in 1 000, to be exact, contain a suit of at least five cards, that is the first part of the distribution to which attention should be directed.

The next question is, is the suit itself worth four tricks according to any system of valuation. If not, are there tricks

enough in other suits to bring the hand as a whole up to that value. If not, the suit is not worth a bid no matter how many cards there are in it unless its length will justify pre-empting. Any five card suit is a 'long suit'.

If the hand as a whole is worth four tricks at least one sure trick should be in the long suit ace or king queen. If this is a playing suit, the hand is never a no trumper unless it contains four aces, and not always then.

If the suit is one of only five cards it is never worth a free bid of more than one, no matter what outside strength the hand may contain, unless you judge it safe to pre-empt by bidding so high that the opponents will be afraid to bid your weak suit.

One objection to pre-empting is that it discloses to the opponents the fact that you are afraid of some suit, or you would not want to shut it out. Here is a curious example of a freak deal in which eleven tables out of thirteen got away with the pre-emptive bid of four hearts and won the game. At two tables the second player had nerve enough to overcall with four spades, was doubled by the dealer, but made it!

No 16

♥ 8 6 4 2  
 ♣ Q 10 8 5  
 ♦ 10 9 6  
 ♠ J 4

♥ J 7 5  
 ♣ 4  
 ♦ K J 8 3  
 ♠ A K 10 5 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9  
 ♣ 9 7 6 3 2  
 ♦ 5 4  
 ♠ Q 9 8 6 3

♥ A K Q 10 3  
 ♣ A K J  
 ♦ A Q 7 2  
 ♠ 7

Played at hearts, Z must make five trump tricks, four clubs and the ace of diamonds, four odd and four honours in one hand. Played at spades, Y led the trump, imagining hearts would be ruffed immediately. A won the jack and put dummy in with the queen to lead a diamond, which Z ducked. At one table A finessed the jack, at the other he put on the king, but that made no difference in the final result, as A's club lead established the cross ruff as soon as Z had made his heart trick. The fifth club in dummy and the ruff in diamonds wins four odd, depending on whether Z takes home his ace of diamonds early or late.

The reason for refusing to bid more than one on a five card suit is that you want your partner to deny it if he is short in it. This warning is especially necessary in case the free bid is made on only four cards, and four card suit bids are getting more common every day. When you propose a suit for the trump you are offering to promote the power of every card in that suit making the smallest card in it as good as the ace of a plain suit. This is true of the trumps held by the adversaries as well as those held by your side. It is for this reason that a bidder who proposes a playing suit should be reasonably sure of holding enough cards in it to outlast the opponents, even if he cannot disarm them.

Having sorted your hand and found in it a suit of four or more cards that is worth a bid, the next thing is to decide by examining the distribution of the high cards in other suits, if any, to which class your hand belongs, as this is the key to your future procedure. It will always be found to belong to one of these four.

It is a suit bid with nothing more to say about that suit.

It is a suit bid with an extra sure trick in another suit to justify a rebid.



encouraging assist. Had Z passed the spade bid Y would have rebid the hearts on his own cards.

B has nothing more to say. He bid all his hand was worth when he called one spade. Any further bidding is up to A. When B and Z pass, A counts his club king as a sure trick, the ace being marked with Z and this justifies A in rebidding the spades as he has four tricks to add to his partner's five, making nine.

Each side has counted its combined hands up to nine. Z had four values in clubs, Y four in hearts and one in diamonds. B had four values in spades. A had four in diamonds and one in clubs. Whichever side played the hand could win just those nine tricks and no more. The side that did not play the hand could make only its aces and kings, four tricks.

Although either side would know from the bidding that it had reached the limit of safety many players would go to four hearts on Y's cards, just to prevent the possibility of B's going game in spades, and A in turn might go to four spades to prevent the same possibility in hearts if Y went to four or he might double, the situation being what is known as a 'free double'. That is if they can make four hearts, the game is gone. If they cannot it is just as well to collect 100 a trick as 50.

I have found that the most successful players are always willing to overbid their hands a trick if they have any fear that the other side may go game or any hope that they may win it. The logic of the situation is this.

If you get the play of the hand after having overbid your cards, there are two chances in your favour. The adversaries may slip up in the play and give you a trick or two to which you are not entitled, or, you may find a fortunate distribution of the cards that will give you tricks which could not have been counted on in the bidding. That



pre-emptive bidding hand is a case in point. Overbidding, the spade hand found a lucky distribution.

As we have seen, the bidder's partner counts all high cards at the double value in that system unless the suit is named by another player. Having no high cards, the only possible values must be in the trump suit, and even that is worthless unless he can trump something. This depends on distribution. Here is an illuminating case of deferred assistance.

No 10

♥ J 10 8 6  
 ♣ 9 8 7 5  
 ♦ 10 7 4 2  
 ♠ 6

♥ 9 4 2

♣ 6

♦ K Q J

♠ A K Q 10 7 2

	Y	
A		B
	/	

♥ 3

♣ Q J 10 4 2

♦ 9 8 6 5

♠ J 9 4

♥ A K Q 7 5

♣ A K 3

♦ A 3

♠ 6 5 4

Z dealt and bid a heart. A bid one spade and Y passed. This shows nothing, but when B passes it at least admits that he holds three spades, or he would deny the suit.

Z rebids the hearts on his outside tricks. A rebids the spades. Still no response from Y, who has nothing but the extra trump and the ability to ruff the second spade two tricks. He required four to assist the first time, three to assist the second time. Z rebids again, going to three hearts, and A goes to three spades. Now Y assists, showing two tricks by bidding four hearts. Only two, or he would have asked before. Surely two, or he would not assist now.

A has rebid his hand twice only, and B cannot produce the three tricks necessary for an assist. He can trump hearts, but has no extra trump length. A goes to four spades to save game and his honour score.

Now Z can see that five hearts are impossible, as he knows from the deferred assist that only two of his five losers can be taken care of by Y. It should also be clear to A that if B cannot assist a second rebid, B cannot take care of more than one of A's five losers, but the game is in danger, and would have been lost, as Z can make four odd by ruffing spades twice in dummy, even if A starts with a defensive trump lead.

It being a free double, Z doubled four spades and set the contract one trick by winning the jack of hearts, led, and returning a trump to disarm dummy. Dummy got in one ruff and led a diamond which Z won, leading another trump. Now Z must make another heart trick and a club, scoring 100 points against A's nine honours.

Here is an illustration of the third class of hand, which is not at all uncommon. Players are divided in opinion as to the best way to open the bidding.

No 19

♥ K 4 2  
 ♣ K 9 8 6 5  
 ♦ 10 9 8 6 4  
 ♠ None

♥ A Q J 10 7 5  
 ♣ 4 3 2  
 ♦ J  
 ♠ A K 9

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 8 3  
 ♣ Q 5  
 ♦ Q 7 5 2  
 ♠ J 10 7 4

♥ 6  
 ♣ A J 10  
 ♦ A K 3  
 ♠ Q 8 6 5 3 2

Z deals. He would like spades to be the trump, but there is no defence in that suit if it turns out not to be the trump. Many players believe in bidding the spades on the strength of the compensating tricks in other suits, but Z preferred to show the helping suit first and bid one diamond.

It may be remarked that if Z starts with a spade, Y will have no assist and the opponents will get the contract at two or three hearts, which they can make, with four honours in one hand. This is what happened at several tables when Z started with a spade bid. Those that bid three spades over three hearts could not make it.

A bid two hearts over the diamond, to show B that he need not deny the suit if he was short in it. Y assisted the diamonds, bidding three and B made a most unwarranted assist, bidding three hearts, although he had not a trick in his hand and could not trump anything until the third round.

Z now bids his secondary suit, spades, and A, encouraged by his partner's assist, went to four hearts. Y, reading Z's hand for a two-suiter, went back to the suit in which he had the more cards and bid five diamonds. This B doubled, and all passed.

A led the ace of hearts, and seeing dummy had the king, led a small club, judging that to be his partner's assisting suit. The ace killed B's queen, and Z led the king of trumps, dropping the jack, which led him to infer the doubling hand had four to the queen. He then led the club jack and overtook it with the king, trumped the small heart with the ace and led trumps until the queen fell, still holding the hearts stopped with king.

This gave the declarer five odd doubled, and is a striking example of the value of an "approaching bid" which always gives the partner a choice between two suits, instead

of confining his attention to one. Once having started with the spades, it is impossible to bring the diamond suit into action.

Hands that are classed as two-suiters are divided into two classes again by their distribution of strength. Both suits may be good bids, and which is named first may not seem to matter much, or, one suit may be a strong free bid, while the other is not up to standard in defensive strength.

When both are equally good bids it is the rule to bid the suit of higher rank first, so that if the partner prefers it he need not increase the contract. Some players disregard this rule of bidding the higher rank first if the lower ranking suit is longer, but when the bidding is likely to run into high figures, as in the helping suits, it is better to stick to the rule. Take this case, in which it did not matter which suit was bid first.

No 20

♥ 9 6 2  
 ♣ 6 5 4  
 ♦ K 10 9 3  
 ♠ J 7 3

♥ Q 8 5 4  
 ♣ 9 8  
 ♦ 8 5 2  
 ♠ 9 6 5 4

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A K J 7 3  
 ♣ K 10 3  
 ♦ 6 4  
 ♠ K 6 2

♥ 10  
 ♣ A Q J 7 2  
 ♦ A Q J 7  
 ♠ A Q 10

Z avoids the error of bidding no-trumps with a singleton in his hand, and starts with one diamond, which A and

No 22

	♥	9 7 5 2			
	♣	A 6 5 4 3 2			
	♦	9 8			
	♠	6			
♥	A K Q J 6			♥	10 8 4 3
♣	K Q 10			♣	8
♦	K 3			♦	Q J 10 7 4
♠	J 7 4			♠	8 5 2
	♥	none			
	♣	J 9 7			
	♦	A 6 5 2			
	♠	A K Q 10 9 3			

Z deals and bids two spades. A puts in a defensive bid of three hearts. As a two-bid is on the same plane as a re-bid of one, Y is justified in assisting with only three tricks. Counting the hand on the Culbertson system, the ace of clubs and extra length of three cards is worth  $2\frac{1}{2}$  and the fourth heart is another  $\frac{1}{2}$ , total 3, so Y bids three spades. If B counts his assisting strength and bids without regard to the possible weakness of A's bid on account of its defensive position, B can value his hand at four tricks: 1 for four trumps, 2 for the singleton when holding four trumps and a  $\frac{1}{2}$  each for the extra diamonds, so he bids four hearts. Z rebids on his sure trick outside spades, calling four. This A doubled.

A led the king of hearts, which Z trumped. Three winning trumps followed, dummy discarding one each in diamonds and hearts. Z then led the jack of clubs, A played the queen and dummy ducked. With the clubs still blocked, A led another heart, which Z trumped. The nine of clubs followed and A put on the king as if to lead Z to believe the ten would fall from B, but Z did not fall into the trap, because he does not care who has the ten, it is sure to fall on a third round.

No matter what A leads next Z gets three diamond discards on the three small clubs in dummy winning five by cards. At one table A was bold enough to take a chance on leading the king of diamonds instead of the second round of hearts suspecting something was up, with that long club suit in dummy. Z let the king of diamonds ride, won the next diamond and made four odd.

It is a common mistake to bid two of a playing suit simply on account of its length, without regard to its defensive strength. This is always dangerous in these freak distributions, on account of the possibility of a better long suit being bid up against you. Take this example of a mistake made at nine tables in a duplicate game.

No 23

♥ Q 10 5  
♣ 10 7 6 5 2  
♦ 6 2  
♠ J 8 3

♥ A  
♣ K 9 4  
♦ 9 7 5  
♠ A K Q 10 6 2



♥ 6 3  
♣ A Q J 8 3  
♦ Q 10 8 3  
♠ 9 4

♥ K J 9 8 7 4 2  
♣ None  
♦ A K J 4  
♠ 7 5

When Z deals and bids two hearts, A bids three spades, and Y has no assist, so A gets the play at spades. Y naturally leads a heart and A makes a little slam, losing a diamond trick at the end.

When Z makes the correct opening bid, one diamond, reserving the hearts for a secondary bid if the situation seems advisable, A bids two spades, Y passes, B does not deny spades as A bids two when one was enough. Now Z

bids three hearts, which he could make if left to play it, perhaps four odd, but A goes to three spades on his outside tricks, and is left in

Y leads the six of diamonds, the suit first named and the one that shows the defence. Z wins with the jack, dummy having the queen, makes ace and king and leads a fourth round. A trumps with the ten, and Y wins with the jack, coming back with a club, which Z trumps, setting the spade contract, instead of losing a little slam.

Good players, I find, make an exception in the case of two-suiters by disregarding the high-card values in many cases, because these two suiters are invariably poor defensive hands against the two other suits in which they are short, and it is important to show the attacking strength at once, while it is cheap to do so.

Many of these two-suiters would be passed up without a bid by players who are martinets on the subject of sure tricks, and who overlook the fact that suit distribution may be strong enough in many cases to compensate for any weakness in high card distribution. Take this case as an example:

No 21

♥ J 9  
♣ K J 7 2  
♦ A 10 9 8 7  
♠ Q 8

♥ K 10 7 5 2  
♣ A 6  
♦ 4  
♠ J 10 6 5 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ Q 8 6 4 3  
 ♣ 9 4  
 ♦ Q J  
 ♠ A K 4 3

♥ A  
♣ Q 10 8 5 3  
♦ K 6 5 3 2  
♠ 9 7

Z deals. On high card or sure trick valuation his hand is not worth a bid. If he calls one diamond he has not a sure trick in the suit, but he has a two suiter with no defensive values but with strong attacking values, which should be shown before it is too late so Z bids a diamond the higher ranking of two suits.

A might have bid the spades first, but considered them a little too weak so he called the hearts. He would have made a bid even if the dealer had passed although he has no sure trick in either suit and his hand is below average in high cards.

Y assisted the diamonds. There is no occasion for a jump bid in a helping suit, in which the chance for game is very slight, unless Z has a rebid. B assisted the hearts bidding two.

Z thought it best to show his clubs, as his partner might be even stronger in that suit than in diamonds bidding three. A did the same thing on the same principle, bidding three spades, and Y went back to the diamonds, bidding four. B thought the hearts the better suit, as he had more of them, and bid four, which closed the contract.

The remarkable thing about this hand is that four by cards can be made in clubs, diamonds, or spades, five odd in hearts.

If the hand is played with diamonds as trumps, Z's first call, he loses only two hearts and the ace of clubs.

If the hand is played with clubs trumps, Z wins four odd in the same way, losing two hearts and the ace of trumps.

If played at hearts, dummy gets rid of the losing club on the fifth spade trick. Thus discard is impossible with spades trumps, as the number of hearts in each hand is equal.

Many good players make it a rule to call a two-suiter with any five or six honours in the hand, that is one-fourth of the honours in the pack. Two suiters are never good no



trumpers, and the partner should never leave a no trumper in if he holds a two-suiter. If the no-trumper rebids after the second suit is shown, leave him in. He has been fairly warned.

For a two-suiter it is necessary to have two suits, either of which would be good free bids, and to start with the one of higher rank. If one is not a sound free bid, start with the other, regardless of its rank.

All hands are supposed to be counted up and valued according to some system before making a declaration of any kind, and with anything less than four tricks they should pass. Players who use pip counting systems for suit bids will find them very unreliable in many cases.

There are players who disregard both trick values and distribution entirely, and who invariably make a bid of some kind if they hold six or more cards above the ten, no matter what they are, or in what suits. The theory is that with six cards out of the sixteen in the pack, they hold more than a third. Here is a curious example of this system.

No 25

♥ K 9 5  
 ♣ K Q 6 5 2  
 ♦ A K 8 6  
 ♠ 9

♥ A 6 4  
 ♣ None  
 ♦ 10 9 5 3  
 ♠ A K Q 7 5 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 10 8 2  
 ♣ 10 8 7 3  
 ♦ Q  
 ♠ 10 8 6 4 2

♥ Q J 7 3  
 ♣ A J 9 4  
 ♦ J 7 4 2  
 ♠ J

At ten tables Z dealt and passed. A bid either two or

three spades Y knows it is idle to double when partner has no bid and passes, leading a spade as the best defence to his own no trump distribution in three suits Z goes game on the cross ruff, as Y cannot lead trumps a second time, and A is prepared to lose two heart tricks any time.

At the one table at which Z was a player who will not pass up a hand with six honours, he bids one heart A bid three spades, but Y went at once to four hearts, and when A went to four spades to save the game, Y bid five hearts and Z made it, through A's mistake in leading the ace of trumps to see if his spades were good for a trick.

This was a narrow escape for Z Had A led a spade and then a diamond, they would have made six tricks, instead of two only Another illustration of the advantage of the declarer's play against adversaries who may slip up and give him tricks that he is not entitled to.

There are some purely conventional suit bids, which will be dealt with in their proper place.

All the foregoing principles with regard to five card suit bids, and the following chapters on four-card suit bids and on no trumpers, are given as examples for the dealer, but they apply equally to the second hand if the dealer passes, with the following slight differences.

In the first place, the dealer having passed indicates a hand probably below average in high cards It is then a question as to whether the third or fourth hand is the stronger The fourth hand has the advantage of position, lying over the third hand, and with a weak hand on his left, therefore, if the second hand gets the contract, with the fourth hand for his dummy, he will be in position to lead through probable strength and up to probable weakness.

In the second place, if the second hand does not bid, the third hand may refuse to declare, knowing his partner, the dealer has nothing worth showing, and may sit back

to play a defensive game. The fourth hand will then probably throw in his cards, refusing to open the bidding unless he is unusually strong. This suggests that the second hand, when he has anything, should lose no opportunity to encourage the fourth hand to enter the bidding.

It must never be forgotten that a player who has still to speak may have a hand that is just on the verge, and wants only a little encouragement; or may have a hand that is pretty strong; but not up to fourth-hand declaration standards.

In the third place, a bid by the second hand, although it may not land the contract, and may not be successful in encouraging the fourth hand to enter the competition, may be very useful in showing the best defence if third hand gets the contract. Some players insist that this consideration emphasizes the importance of the second hand's bids being on sure tricks, at least one in the suit named, so that fourth hand may plan his campaign accordingly. Here is a remarkable illustration of this situation:

No. 26.

	♥	K Q J 10 9 7 4	
	♣	J 9	
	♦	A K J	
	♠	K	
♥	5		♥
♣	A K 3		♣
♦	Q 8 4 2		♦
♠	9 8 6 5 2		♠
		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">           Y            A                  B                                Z         </div>	
	♥	8 6	
	♣	10 6 4	
	♦	10 9 7 5 3	
	♠	Q J 10	
			♥
			♣
			♦
			♠

Z dealt and passed. At every table but one A also passed, and Y pre-empted by bidding three hearts, which held. Judging that the spade suit was the one Y was

afraid of, B led his ace of spades to have a look. Then hoping to save game if he could find his partner with a diamond trick and make one of his own small trumps, B led the singleton.

A could read the situation from dummy's cards and his own, showing B could have no smaller diamond and marking Y with A K J alone so A ducked and the jack won. Y very cleverly led the four of trumps, and B thought he saw his chance for A to win a trump trick and return a diamond saving the game.

Instead of that, the six of trumps held and on dummy's two good spades Y got rid of two losing clubs, winning five by cards and the game.

At the one table at which A bid a club, Y's three heart bid was set for two tricks. B was confident that A had two sure tricks. If there are not both in clubs, he must have ace of diamonds, so he led the singleton, stopped the trump lead with the ace and led a small club which A won with the king, coming right back with the diamond which he had correctly read as a singleton lead. This B trumped, leading another small club and getting a second ruff in diamonds. Without further speculation he took home his ace of spades for the sixth trick. But for the fear of some freak distribution he would have doubled the three-heart bid.

It is interesting to note that A cannot be bidding on the king-queen of clubs, as B has the queen, so it must be some combination headed by the ace, and the only possible outside trick must be the ace of diamonds. If not that card, A must have both ace and king of clubs. Whichever it is, B's plan of campaign is invincible, as he must make two small trumps, unless Y's hand is a freak.

The conditions that should govern all free bids in suit, as shown by the foregoing examples, are these:

Length is no justification for a bid that would not be

sound if there were only five cards in the suit, unless the rest of the hand is a no trump, so strong that it is highly improbable that any other player at the table will be strong enough to make a bid, or unless the suit is so long that it can pre-empt by bidding three or four.

For a bid of one in a playing suit, there must be at least four tricks in the hand as a whole, at least one sure trick in the suit itself, which should contain five cards. Two five-card suits may be bid on weaker hands upon occasion. Hands that are not strictly two suiter are not rebid unless there are sure tricks in addition to those required to justify the bid, which means more than four tricks in the hand as a whole.

For a bid of one in a helping suit length is not essential, but there must be two sure tricks in the hand, and the suit named should contain at least the ace.

For a free bid of two there should be sufficient length and strength to disregard the possibility of finding partner short in the suit. Rebidding is governed by the same rule as for one-trick bids. Bidding two in a suit of only five cards is a mistake, even with four honours and outside strength. There is no such thing as a free bid of two in a helping suit. It is one or four or five.

For a two-suiter either suit should be a good one for the trump with the strength in the other to support it, and the higher ranking suit should be bid first, even if a card shorter.

For a secondary bid, the suit should be long enough, but not strong enough defensively for a free bid.

In approaching bids, at least two tricks in the suit named are necessary, if that suit is named in preference to a long weak playing suit. In an approach to a no-trump distribution is the key, the hand as a whole being strong enough but having its weak spot.

♥ A J 10 3  
 ♣ A K 4 2  
 ♦ 9 8 5  
 ♠ 6 4

♥ A K 10 4  
 ♣ A Q 2  
 ♦ 9 8 5  
 ♠ 6 4 2

The first of these examples is not a no trumper because only two suits are protected or "stopped". Some players would call a club on these cards, hoping to hear something from the other suits, especially the spades, but the bolder and better call is one heart, which one spade will still over call. You are not interested in the diamonds.

In the second example there is no question about calling the hearts.

Many players do not think that four cards to the three top honours in a playing suit, with nothing outside, is a good bid. They argue that the hand is not up to the standard of four tricks for a free bid, but has great defensive value. Others maintain that if the partner has three or four of the suit and anything outside, it may turn out to be a good call. Or, if the partner denies the suit its defensive and assisting power is greatly increased, because if he is short one adversary must have four in the suit, and if he has not five all three of these top cards are certainly good for tricks as a plain suit.

The reason that at least one sure trick is required in another suit to justify a bid on only four cards of a playing suit is Whitfeld's rule of substitution. For example you hold high cards in two suits, worthless cards in the others.

♥ A K 10 4  
 ♣ A 6 2

♠ A Q 10 6  
 ♦ A K 4 2

In the first example, if you count up the heart suit on either system of valuation, it is worth three tricks only. Consequently it is in itself not worth a bid, but the club ace brings the hand up to four values.

Another way to look at it is to apply Whitfeld's system. If you had five hearts instead of four only, it would be a sound heart call. As you have a sure trick in a plain suit to take the place of the missing fifth trump, it is still a sound bid.

Now take the second example. The spade suit in itself would not be a sound call even with five cards. If we consider one of the sure tricks in diamonds as taking the place of the missing fifth spade, it is still not a spade call, as the high cards are worth three tricks only. But with the second sure trick in diamonds, the hand is brought up to a value of four, and equal to five spades. Many players prefer to call the diamonds in this example, waiting to hear from the other suits, but that is playing the backward game.

*Helping suits are frequently brought into use when there is a good secondary bid in a playing suit, not strong enough to call as a free bid.*

♥ Q J 8 6 4  
 ♣ A K 6 3  
 ♦ 7 4  
 ♠ J 10

♥ 5  
 ♣ A 7 2  
 ♦ A K 5  
 ♠ J 10 7 6 4 2

In the first example the hearts are not a sound free bid as there is not a sure trick in the suit if it does not turn out to be the trump. By calling the helping suit, clubs, and on the second round, if the opportunity seems favourable, bidding the hearts, the partner is left under no misapprehension.

If the opponents get the contract he knows you will lead clubs, and if it is his lead he will lead clubs, not hearts.

In the second example many players would bid a spade to show the suit at once, without waiting for a second round, as they have "compensating values" in the other suits. More careful players would prefer the diamonds as an approaching bid, hoping to hear from the heart suit.

the usual definition of the chief requirement for a no trump call strength or protection in at least three suits

By *protection* is meant such high cards as will probably prevent the adversaries from running down the whole suit against you but it is a rather elastic definition three to a king or four to a jack or ten being often included in this category

As soon as we eliminate the hands that contain a good five card playing suit but have strength in three or four suits we get down to studying the distribution of these suits the most favourable being those in which there is only one two card suit or none There are only three of these with the order of their frequency in 1 000 deals

4	3	3	3	4	4	3	2	5	3	3	2
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



No-trump bids have another disadvantage, which is that the partner has no idea of where the strength lies, and how much of it is in one suit, so he cannot understandingly assist. This has led many good players to make it a rule never to assist no-trumpers, because they do not know what they are assisting. When one bids a spade, the partner knows that the chief strength is in spades, and also knows just what assistance in spades is required in the dummy. But when one bids no-trumps just where assistance is needed is usually a guess game.

With any of the three foregoing distributions, the first question is, have you five or more tricks, counted at double valuation? If so you should have a bid. Take the following examples: the initial D standing for the double valuation system, C for the Culbertson system. All cards below the ten being indicated by "x"

♥ Q x x  
 ♣ A x x  
 ♦ K x x x  
 ♠ A Q x  
 D 5, C 4

♥ A K x x  
 ♣ K x x  
 ♦ x x x  
 ♠ A Q x  
 D 6, C 4½

♥ K x x  
 ♣ A K x x  
 ♦ A Q x  
 ♠ x x x  
 D 7, C 4½

In the first example there is no question about a free bid in no-trumps. In the second many players prefer the four-card suit bid, one heart, but if three odd in hearts can be made, it is not game, whereas three in trumps would be. If one can make four in hearts, dummy must be able to provide four tricks, and at least three of them must be in diamonds or clubs. The third example is the strongest of all at double valuation, but many players dislike the look

of two unprotected playing suits and prefer the approach bid of one club hoping to hear something about the location of the strength in the playing suits especially spades

There are a number of such hands possessing the most desirable suit distribution for no-trumps but lacking the proper high card distribution both of which must be taken into account Others again offer no choice Take these examples

♥ A Q x	♥ A x x	♥ A x x x
♣ x x x	♣ A K x	♣ x x x
♦ K x x x	♦ x x x	♦ A K x
♠ A K x	♠ Q J x x	♠ K x x
D 7, C 4½	D 6, C 4	D 7, C 4

The first of these is unquestionably a no trumper, as there is no sound suit bid, and the hand is too strong to pass In the second example, both playing suits are protected, but neither of them good enough for a bid To waste such a hand on an approaching club bid with the danger of being left in, is timid bidding Bid no-trumps In the third example, the defensive value in two suits is weak, but it is too good to waste on a diamond call, owing to the improbability of any one being strong enough in a playing suit to overcall In this respect it differs from the third of the first three examples given

In all these hands we find the condition that a trump suit would be of no use to the declarer, as he cannot trump anything, but in many hands four-card bids are made in the playing suits as approaching bids, willing to go to no trumps if the occasion seems favourable A no-trump bid, as a rebid of a suit, always shows that there was a

weak spot in the hand that prevented the original no trump call

When we come to the more common distributions in which there is a two-card suit, the majority of them are the 4 4 3 2 class. Opinions are divided as to the advisability of making an approaching bid, instead of no-trumps, on hands that have a two card suit, unless that suit is protected with ace or king. The mathematicians tell us that if one player holds only two small cards of a suit, the partner will hold high cards enough to protect that suit, four times out of five. This would indicate that waiting for protection in all four suits when one of them is only two cards is too backward a game. On the other hand, if the two-card suit holds the strength to protect a third suit only, one of the others being defenceless, then it should be at least ace-queen. Here are some examples

♥ A 7	♥ K 8 7 2	♥ A J 8 3
♠ A Q 8 3	♠ A Q 2	♠ 9 5
♦ A 10 4 2	♦ 10 5	♦ Q J 8 3
♣ K 7 3	♣ A Q 6 2	♣ A 9 8
D 7, C 5	D 5, C 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	D 4, C 3 $\frac{1}{2}$

The first example is from R. R. Richard's "Championship Bridge," and was the dealer's hand in No. 13, which so far from being an unlucky number allowed him to make the odd trick, through A's leading away from a tenace suit instead of opening one in which he had three honours in sequence. The heart opening would have set the no-trumper four tricks. On the other hand A and B could have made four odd and game in either hearts or spades. Here is the distribution:

No 27

♥ 3 2  
 ♣ J 9 6 5 2  
 ♦ Q 7 5 3  
 ♠ 4 2

♥ Q J 10 6  
 ♣ 10  
 ♦ 9 8 6  
 ♠ A Q J 8 5

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ K 9 8 5 4  
 ♣ K 7 4  
 ♦ K J  
 ♠ 10 9 6

♥ A 7  
 ♣ A Q 8 3  
 ♦ A 10 4 2  
 ♠ K 7 3

The second example is also from the play in the matches for the Championship at Chicago in December, 1927. Here is the distribution. It was deal No 34.

No 28

♥ 6  
 ♣ J 10  
 ♦ Q 8 7 6 4 2  
 ♠ K 9 8 7

♥ A 10 9 4  
 ♣ 9 6 5 3  
 ♦ A K J 9  
 ♠ 4

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ Q J 5 3  
 ♣ K 8 7 4  
 ♦ 3  
 ♠ J 10 5 3

♥ K 8 7 2  
 ♣ A Q 2  
 ♦ 10 5  
 ♠ A Q 6 2

At one table, when Z bid no trump, his partner took him out with two diamonds, but Z did not heed the warning, going back to no trumps, which was set one trick. Y could have made two diamonds. At the other table Z started with one spade. It is a game hand in spades, as

the hand was played carelessly by A, who carried home his ace of diamonds by leading a small one at the third trick for his partner to trump, after he had made his ace of hearts and king of diamonds

The third example is also from the same match, and shows the same difference in choice of the opening bid, preferring the suit call when the two-card suit is defenceless. Here is the distribution:

No 29

♥	10	7	6	5
♣	K	Q	J	3
♦	5	4		
♠	Q	J	3	

♥ K Q  
♣ 10 2  
♦ A K 6  
♠ K 10 7 6 5 4

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥	9 4 2
♣	A 8 7 6 4
♦	10 9 7 2
♠	2

♥	A J 8 2
♣	9 5
♦	Q J 8 3
♠	A 9 8

At one table Z played the hand at no trumps and was set three tricks. At the other table he started with one heart, and his partner carried him to three over the opponents' spades. Z could have made three hearts if he had not been misled by A's false card and B's play of four and nine, and let the heart queen win.

When we get to the 5 3 3 2 distributions, the only reason for calling no trumps is that the five-card suit is not a sound playing suit bid or the hand is too good to waste on a helping suit of five cards.

Here are some examples of this choice, when the five-card suit is regarded merely as a stopper. This was No 31 in the championship.

No 30

♥ 10 8 7  
 ♣ Q 6 4 2  
 ♦ A 8  
 ♠ Q 9 5 3

♥ Q 9 3  
 ♣ K 10 9 8 5  
 ♦ 9 7 2  
 ♠ A K

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ J 6 5 2  
 ♣ 7 3  
 ♦ K 10 5 4 3  
 ♠ 10 4

♥ A K 4  
 ♣ A J  
 ♦ Q J 6  
 ♠ J 8 7 6 2

When Z bid no trump, he went game with three odd. Had he bid the spades, he would have made four odd and game, but lost the honour score. The discard of the third heart on the third diamond makes the fourth trick. Here is another case in which the dealer makes a small slam at either spades or no trump, but both tables played the hand, No 3 in the championships at spades, wisely avoiding the no-trump call with a weak two-card suit.

No 31

♥ A K 10 6 5  
 ♣ 8 7  
 ♦ K 9  
 ♠ A Q 8 2

♥ Q J 8 2  
 ♣ A 6 5 4 2  
 ♦ Q J 8  
 ♠ 5

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 7  
 ♣ J 10 9  
 ♦ 7 6 5 4 3  
 ♠ 6 4 3

♥ 4 3  
 ♣ K Q 3  
 ♦ A 10 2  
 ♠ K J 10 9 7

Against the spade bid A led the queen of hearts, which gave Z a finesse of the ten later and a club discard. Against no-trumps a small club would probably be the opening, and the declarer gets a squeeze on A in the red suits at the end. In both these hands the declarer is fortunate in finding his partner can protect his weak two-card suit.

As a rule, when we get down to the 5 4 2 2 distribution, or any of those in which there are two short suits, or a singleton, the two-card suits must both be ace-king or ace-queen to justify calling no-trumps. Some players take a chance on one of the two-card suits if the other is strong enough. Take this case.

No 32.

♥ A K 6 4 2  
 ♣ Q  
 ♦ 6 5 4 3 2  
 ♠ 9 7

♥ J 8  
 ♣ 10 6 2  
 ♦ K 8 7  
 ♠ A K Q 4 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 7 5  
 ♣ K J 4 3  
 ♦ J 10 9  
 ♠ J 10 5 3

♥ Q 10 9 3  
 ♣ A 9 8 7 5  
 ♦ A Q  
 ♠ 8 6

The result is the same regardless of Z's first call. If he takes a chance on the spades and bids no trump, his partner saves him by bidding two hearts and making four odd. He must lose two spades and a diamond. If Z starts with a one club bid, A calls the spades. Y the hearts, and they get it up to four hearts. Four spades would be doubled and set for 300, by the cross ruff.

The choice between no trumps and four cards of a playing suit is sometimes more matter of luck than good judgment. Here is a deal that illustrates this and at the same time calls attention to the fact that those who use the double valuation system do not double short suits in which they have no small cards. They count a singleton ace as one only, and ace king alone as two instead of calling the ace two and the ace king four. This is because even if they promote smaller cards in the dummy, they cannot put that hand in by leading a third round.

No 33

♥ Q 8 6 5  
 ♣ 9 6 3  
 ♦ 8 6  
 ♠ 8 6 3 2

♥ J 10  
 ♣ Q J 10 5 2  
 ♦ Q 7 5  
 ♠ K J 4

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 7 4  
 ♣ 8 7 4  
 ♦ A K 2  
 ♠ 10 9 7 5

♥ A K 3 2  
 ♣ A K  
 ♦ J 10 9 4 3  
 ♠ A Q

Z counts his hand as worth 7 reckoning the unguarded clubs as worth 2 only. If he bids no-trump, he makes only the odd trick unless his partner is one of those who believe in the weak rescue with the better of any four card suits. Y's hand is worth nothing as an assist to no-trumps, but is worth two tricks at hearts. If Y bids two hearts, he makes four odd and game, by separating the two long trumps and refusing the spade finesse.

At no trumps the combined value of the hands is 7 and



they make 7. The hand is also worth 7 on the Culbertson valuation, but Y's is worth 1, making 8 which they cannot get. With a heart bid Z's hand is worth 7½, and dummy's 2½ which is 10 and this they can make. A good example of close valuation in trump suits.

There are some optimistic players who always bid no trumps when they have 100 aces. What they accomplish beyond showing the opponents that it is totally useless for them to bid anything with any hope of going game, I have always been unable to see. One no-trump is enough, bidding one club and listening in is better. Here is an example.

No 34

♥ Q J 8 5  
 ♣ 10 8 4 3  
 ♦ Q 7 3  
 ♠ 6 4

♥ 4  
 ♣ K Q J  
 ♦ J 10 2  
 ♠ K Q J 9 8 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ K 10 9 7 2  
 ♣ 7 5 2  
 ♦ K 9 5  
 ♠ 7 5

♥ A 6 3  
 ♣ A 9 6  
 ♦ A 8 6 4  
 ♠ A 10 2

When Z bid two no-trumps all passed and A led a spade. Z held off one round but had to win the jack. He then led a small heart for the finesse, and B won the jack with the king returning a small club. Z put on the ace and led ace and another heart but found B blocking the suit. A discarded the ten and jack of diamonds.

This discard misled Z who played the queen of diamonds from dummy, the king covered, and Z played the ace,

expecting to drop the nine from A, establishing the suit, but A played the deuce. Had dummy led the club A would have made both his clubs and four spades. B holds the diamonds stopped with the nine, so Z is set three tricks less 100 aces. Net loss 50 points.

When Z started with a club bid as an approach A bid spades and B two hearts, A returning to two spades. All that Z can make is his four aces, but that saves the game. It is curious to note that the position of the nine of diamonds settles the result at no trumps. Give Y that card and Z makes his contract.

*I confess I did not approve of A's discards.* Why throw away any possible tricks in the suit that you know dummy will lead next? Unless B has king of diamonds, Z must make four diamond tricks and his contract, so one diamond discard, the deuce, was enough and then one spade, keeping two clubs.

The danger in all no-trump calls is the freak distribution in the opponents' hands, and the fact that if they have a long suit they get the first jump toward establishing it, and the declarer has no trumps with which to stop it.

It is an old saying that "anything can happen to a no-trumper." Sidney S. Lenz, whose ability to get all there is out of a hand is well known, gave me four hands that he had played on a perfectly sound no trump bid as dealer, and had lost a little slam on each of them. When a no trumper has to make a number of discards from his protected suits, life loses much of its charm.

*I held A's cards in the following hand during a trip to Honolulu.*

No 35

♥ 7 5 3  
 ♣ J 9 4 2  
 ♦ 10 6 5 2  
 ♠ 6 4

♥ A 10 9 8 4 2  
 ♣ 7  
 ♦ A 9 3  
 ♠ 8 7 5

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ K 6  
 ♣ Q 8 5 3  
 ♦ 7 4  
 ♠ A K 10 3 2

♥ Q J  
 ♣ A K 10 6  
 ♦ K Q J 8  
 ♠ Q J 9

Z dealt and bid no trump. All passed. I would have taken out with Y's cards, calling the higher ranking of two four-card suits and an absolute bust, but Y said, after the hand, that would be only increasing the contract. The take-out would drive me to hearts.

It is impossible for A to make more than three odd in hearts, or B to make more than three in spades, because Y will lead a club, and Z will lead the trump, on the general principle that as he cannot trump anything, he should try to prevent the adversaries from doing so, if hearts are trumps. If spades are trumps, Z will have a look by leading club king and then the diamonds. Even if B exhausts the spades, Z must make a trump, a diamond and a club before B can get to work on the hearts.

As played, one no-trump by Z, this is what happened. A led the ten of hearts. B won with the king, led the spade king to show his ace and returned the heart. Y had to make three discards, a spade and two diamonds, hoping

to catch the club queen , but B and Z had each to discard two diamonds and two clubs A returned the spade and B let it ride, Z false carding the queen

This did not deceive B, as A had played the Foster echo, his second-best, on the spade king, showing that as he had only one higher card he could not hold both queen and jack, and either in Z's hand stops the suit Z took a chance that A had two diamonds and two clubs, and led the diamond A won it and led the third spade, getting Z down to ace of clubs and queen of diamonds, with no possible way of telling whether B's last card was a club or a diamond, the more difficult as A discarded the nine of diamonds, and kept the trey He guessed B for a diamond and let go the club

The no trumper loses a little slam The approaching bid, one club, would have driven A or B to a playing suit

## APPROACH BIDS

While the subject of approach bids is chiefly connected with no-trumpers, they are often the advance attack for a secondary bid in a playing suit. Careless players often bid a long suit that is weak in defensive values, when they could have started more safely with a sound bid in a short helping suit.

The best definition, probably, for an approaching bid is any call that the bidder hopes will be later improved upon, either by his partner or himself, and that shall at the same time show the best defence in case the opponents get the contract.

That the best players do not quite agree with the importance of having a sure trick at the top of the suit named in an approaching bid, ace or king queen, is evident from the following examples, taken from important match play.

♥ K x	♥ A x	♥ A Q x
♣ K 10 x x	♣ Q J x x	♣ A x
♦ A x x	♦ K x x x	♦ J 10 x x' x
♠ K x x x	♠ K x x	♠ K J x
One club	One club	One diamond

Personally, I should bid the diamond in the first, no bid on the second, and one club on the third. This carries out the helping suit promise—two tricks in the hand—one in the suit named—if you lead it.

Approaching bids have the advantage of being able to retire from the attack if the situation developed seems to be unfavourable and so avoiding the mistake of leading the partner into supporting a playing suit that is not up to standard as a free bid.

The approach bid is a revolt against the system of

bidding long weak suits just because there are "compensating values" in other suits. The approach bidder advises bidding the compensating values first. Take this example

No 36

♥ K J  
 ♣ Q J 8 6 4 2  
 ♦ A  
 ♠ K Q J 6

♥ 8 5 2  
 ♣ 7 5  
 ♦ K Q J 6 4  
 ♠ A 7 6

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A Q 10 6 4 3  
 ♣ 9 3  
 ♦ 10 7 5 2  
 ♠ 4

♥ 9 7  
 ♣ A K 10  
 ♦ 9 8 3  
 ♠ 10 9 8 3 2

Z passed without a bid, as he belonged to the old school that wants a fourth card, even in a suit that is not intended to be the trump. A bid a diamond, Y two clubs and B three hearts. Z did not feel justified in going to three spades at this stage, nor in supporting the clubs, so he passed, and B went game in hearts, losing only two clubs and a diamond.

When Z bid a club, A bid the diamonds and Y went to no-trumps. He figures that if Z has two sure tricks they are both in clubs or one is in hearts or spades. B passes, as he has the lead. Now Z does not know whether Y is going no trumps to deny the clubs, or is taking advantage of their strength, so he bids two spades on the assumption that Y must have some spade strength to bid no trumps.

When A and Y passed B came out with a three heart

bid on his two suiter, his partner having bid diamonds. Y went to three spades and B, whose hand has no defensive values against the spade threat, is forced to four hearts. Y goes on to four spades, which Z can make easily enough, but B goes to five hearts to save the game. Thus Y doubles, and sets for one trick.

Here is a rather interesting deal that went the rounds of a duplicate game, and illustrates the value of an approaching bid.

No 37

♥ 7  
 ♣ 4 3  
 ♦ A 7 6 2  
 ♠ K 10 9 8 6 4

♥ A K J 5 3 2  
 ♣ 10 9 8 5 2  
 ♦ None  
 ♠ 7 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ None  
 ♣ Q 7 6  
 ♦ Q J 10 9 4  
 ♠ A Q J 5 2

♥ Q 10 9 8 6 4  
 ♣ A K J  
 ♦ K 8 5 3  
 ♠ None

When Z started with a bid of one heart, A could do nothing but hope he would go on, so he bid two clubs. Y denied the hearts with two spades, which B doubled, driving Z to three hearts, which A doubled. They set the heart contract for two tricks, A leading a spade. Z trumped and led three rounds of clubs, to make dummy's little trump. A small diamond, and A trumped Z's king, leading another spade, which Z trumped. A trumped another diamond, and led the club ten, which Z trumped. Another diamond, and A trumped it and made his two

top trumps before forcing Z again Six tricks, setting the contract for 200

At other tables, where the dealer understood the value of the approaching bid Z started with a club A one heart, Y one spade which B doubled, and Z promptly redoubled, hoping to drive A back to hearts in which he succeeded Y and B passed and Z doubled two hearts, setting that contract for 200, and just reversing the score

Y led the club indicated by Z as his defence and trumped the third round Then he led a diamond and A trumped the king, leading a spade, which Z trumped, returning a diamond which A trumped Z trumped the next spade A trumping the third diamond, and leading the established club ten, after which all he could make was his two trumps, six tricks on a contract to make eight

Here is an example of an approaching bid to avoid a weak heart call, the dealer gingerly steering clear of a no-trumper

No 38

♥ K 7 4  
 ♣ 10 7 6 4 2  
 ♦ Q 6 4  
 ♠ 9 7

♥ Q J  
 ♣ Q 8 5  
 ♦ K 7  
 ♠ A 10 8 6 4 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 8 6 5 3  
 ♣ 9 3  
 ♦ A J 10 3 2  
 ♠ J 3

♥ A 10 9 2  
 ♣ A K J  
 ♦ 9 8 5  
 ♠ K Q 5

Z began with a club, A one spade and Y two clubs B and Z passed, to hear from A, who rebid the spades



Y and B passed, and Z cautiously bid three clubs. A passed and Z made four odd, but was annoyed to find that others had gone game at no trumps by false-carding the king of spades on the first trick, getting in again with the spade queen after leading out his three top clubs and making dummy's long clubs and the four heart tricks.

But the three odd and game that looked so easy did not come off at all the tables. On the third diamond lead, when A won with the queen, B sent out a warning note not to trust him for the spade queen, but to put him in with a diamond by discarding the ten. The king of diamonds was therefore led, and the small one, and two losing hearts discarded on that suit, after which A got home five spade tricks, setting the no-trumper for four tricks. Another illustration of the old adage, 'anything can happen to a no-trumper'.

Starting with a helping suit sometimes gives the opponents a wrong impression of the strength of the secondary bid, which looks to them like a forlorn hope. In this way the approach bid resembles camouflage tactics. Take this case:

No 39

♥ 6 2  
 ♣ Q 8 6  
 ♦ A 8 5 3  
 ♠ 9 7 5 3

♥ A K Q 8 7 5  
 ♣ J 10 7  
 ♦ K Q  
 ♠ A K

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ J 10 9 4  
 ♣ 9 5 3  
 ♦ J 10 9 6 4 2  
 ♠ None

♥ 3  
 ♣ A K 4 2  
 ♦ 7  
 ♠ Q J 10 8 6 4 2

Some players started this hand with a pre-emptive three-spade bid, which A promptly overcalled with four hearts. When Y went to four spades and B to five hearts on his ability to ruff spades, Z went to five spades and got set one trick.

At other tables when Z began with one club, A bid two hearts. Y passed and B jumped the bid to three hearts. After some apparent hesitation Z bid three spades, A four hearts, Y and B passing. When Z went four spades it looked to A like a sacrifice to save game and he doubled, instead of going five hearts, in which he was afraid of losing three club tricks at once.

As Z had no trouble in making four odd doubled he scored 50 for the doubled contract, 72 for tricks, and 125 for game, instead of being set 100 on a five spade bid.

following bid, a trick below normal, and we get some interesting situations. This is where the dealer's side always has the advantage. The dealer's partner knows that any free bid is sound and the dealer knows that any assist is reliable. Take this case:

No 40

♥ 4  
 ♣ K 9 7 5 3 2  
 ♦ A 9 8 3  
 ♠ 8 2

♥ A K 10 7 5  
 ♣ 8 6 4  
 ♦ 2  
 ♠ J 10 9 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ Q J 6  
 ♣ Q J 10  
 ♦ Q J 7 6  
 ♠ 7 6 4

♥ 9 8 3 2  
 ♣ A  
 ♦ K 10 4 3  
 ♠ A K Q 5

Z bid a spade, A two hearts, Y three clubs, and B three hearts. Z doubled three hearts and set the contract for three tricks.

A's heart bid is only free-bid strength, and bidding two on his cards is stretching it into a defensive bid, but he would be set only that one trick if left in and have honours to score. Y's club bid is based on five values, and his partner has shown at least four values by his free bid. That is nine. That Y would make nine tricks and fulfil his contract is evident.

But B's assist is totally unjustified. His whole hand is worth only two tricks on the Culbertson valuation, on the double valuation system it is worth nothing, as he cannot trump anything and has not a sure trick in his hand. Taking A's hand as worth four and B's two, we get six, and

that is all they made With three suits stopped, however, and his partner's show of two tricks somewhere, he should have known that game in clubs was impossible for Y, and let him play the hand

It cannot be too often insisted on that if you have any doubts about going game, and are sure the other side cannot go game, let them play it You are going to get 50 a trick if they slip up, all they can get is somewhere between 6 and 10 The moment you go on, they are playing for the 50

It is instructive to note the basis for Z's double, which is a point that many players completely overlook If your partner denies your suit, especially a four-card suit, he has only two cards in it at the most In this case Y cannot have two as good as the queen and small, as Z has the queen himself Consequently the adversaries are long in the suit and Z can count on his ace-king-queen as good for three sure tricks

If Y has enough to justify his interposition of a three club bid doubling three hearts is a certainty, but game in spades is impossible, and in clubs highly improbable Moral let the other side play the hand, but double the penalties

The play was straightforward and instructive Y led the spade and on the third round discarded the encouraging nine of diamonds This made Z's course of action plain After laying down the ace of clubs he led a small diamond Y won with the ace, made his king of clubs and let Z ruff a small club, seven tricks

It frequently happens that a defensive following bid is *made in a helping suit, which presents no chance of winning the game, but may act as a "pusher,"* or perhaps encourage the partner to try something Some players make it a rule not to call helping suits over free bids in a playing suit

unless they can support the other playing suit, if their partners can call it

It is obvious that this cannot be depended on as a system, because there are many hands that present excellent defensive values in helping suits, without any support for either playing suit. The argument against showing a defensive suit second hand, at the risk of being left to play it, is that if the fourth hand has anything between them they will save the game without showing their strength by bidding.

That this is not the right way to look at it experience will soon teach us. Here is one of the most remarkable examples of the value of defensive bidding that ever came to my attention.

No 41

♥ J 4 3 2  
 ♣ 6  
 ♦ A Q 10 5 2  
 ♠ 9 7 2

♥ 10 9 7  
 ♣ K Q J 7 3 2  
 ♦ None  
 ♠ Q 10 6 4

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 5  
 ♣ 10 8 4  
 ♦ 9 8 7 4 3  
 ♠ A K 3 2

♥ A K Q 8 6  
 ♣ A 9 5  
 ♦ K J 6  
 ♠ J 8

Z dealt and bid a heart, A two clubs. At some tables Y jumped the bid to three hearts, to show his four trumps. B passed, feeling sure of saving game if A had two tricks anywhere.

A led a club, which Z won. Then he ruffed dummy with

small club and put himself in again with a trump—not a diamond—and letting dummy trump the third club with the jack. Dummy led his fourth trump and after pulling the adverse trumps Z made his five diamond tricks according to his two losing spades. Grand slam!

At one table when Y went to three hearts B put in a defensive bid of three spades instead of four clubs figuring on spades being probably the opponents weak suit. Z went to four hearts as B anticipated but A bid four spades really with a view to saving the game or forcing a five heart bid.

B was allowed to play the hand at four spades which he made by trumping the second heart lead pulling the adverse trumps and establishing the clubs while dummy still held a trump for re-entry.

At another table the bidding was the same except that Y came to the rescue with five diamonds over A's four spades. This B doubled and Z passed. Y made his five diamonds doubled. After B had made his two winning spades he led a club. This dummy won and they had enough high trumps between them to catch all B's and make all the hearts.

Had B led a third spade the result would have been the same as dummy can trump make his two high trumps and put Y in with a small heart.

The most difficult hands to manage as following bids are those in which there is little or no defensive strength but a good attacking position such as a two-suit that is below average in high cards or a long weak suit that is desirable as the trump. These long one-suit hands are frequently bid pre-emptively hoping to shut out further bidding from the opposition forces.

Another difficult situation for the following bidder is when he holds strength in the dealer's suit and has to

decide about a suit bid or no trumps, or passing to save game

The important point among good players seems to be to have at least one sure trick in the following bid but many take a chance, as will be seen by the following examples, all by players in the championship class

♥ 10 x x x	♥ Q 10 x	♥ Q J x
♣ J x	♣ A K x x	♣ 10 x x
♦ Q x x	♦ x x x	♦ K 10 x
♠ A Q J 10	♠ A x x	♠ A J x x
1 Sp over 1 Ht	1 N-T over 1 Cl	1 N T over 1 Sp
♥ Q J x x	♥ J x x x x	♥ Q 10
♣ A x x x x	♣ K x	♣ Q 10 x x
♦ Q J x	♦ K Q x x x	♦ Q J x x x
♠ x	♠ None	♠ x
2 Cls over 1 Sp	2 Ds over 1 Ht	2 Ds over 1 Sp

The result of the first example was that the partner was encouraged to go to four clubs and made it. In the second example the partner took out the no-trumper with hearts and went game. In the third the same thing happened. The fourth example is not considered exactly sound, but did no harm, as the opposition went on bidding. The fifth example is an example of a camouflage to coax the dealer to go on with the hearts but the player on the left switched to spades. The partner finally assisted the diamonds after denying them, and the hand given won the game on a bid of five diamonds doubled, against cards that were good for a grand slam in spades. The sixth example looks like a rather weak call, but it turned out very fortunately when the dealer went on with the spades.

Four of these examples are from the championship match in 1927. Here is the distribution in the last example

No 42

♥ J 8 6 4 2  
 ♣ K 9 7 6  
 ♦ 5 3  
 ♠ Q 2

♥ Q 10  
 ♣ Q 10 8 3  
 ♦ Q J 9 7 6 4  
 ♠ 7

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A K 9 7 3  
 ♣ 5 4 2  
 ♦ A  
 ♠ 9 6 5 3

♥ 5  
 ♣ A J  
 ♦ K 10 8 2  
 ♠ A K J 10 8 4

The bidding at one table was one spade. As we have seen in the chapter on suit bids, Z should have bid two, to show his partner that he does not care much about the spade distribution, but wants assistance in the other suits. Had the Cleveland player started with two spades he would have won the game and tied the match. The Detroit player started with a bid of three spades.

As it was, the Detroit player holding A's cards bid two diamonds, Y passed, and B denied the diamonds with two hearts, Z bidding two spades. While A's bid may be criticized from the orthodox point of view, A can make two diamonds if left to play it, and B can make two hearts. All that Z can make against this defensive bidding is three odd in spades. In the actual play he made two only.

At the other table, when A's following bid was shut out by the free bid of three spades, A led the queen of diamonds and B came back with the king of hearts. Seeing that queen alone was with Z or A, he led a small heart, which Z trumped with the spade four. He then led the club jack, and overtook it with the king when the queen



covered. This is to get a diamond lead through B, who had the ace but denied the suit.

B trumped and led another small heart. Z would not risk the eight of trumps but played a high one. Dummy trumped the third diamond with the queen and led the deuce of trumps, catching all B's and making the last tricks with the top club and diamond.

But when the Detroit player at the other table started with the heart queen, instead of the diamond, B ducked the second round, and Z trumped, made the same play in clubs, so as to lead diamonds through B, who put on the ace and led another heart, and again Z was afraid to risk the eight of trumps.

There is now nothing to do but to take the long chance that B has a small diamond, however unlikely that is from his take-out, so Z leads the king of diamonds, which B trumps and leads another heart. Dummy trumps a diamond with the queen and leads the deuce. Even now it is not too late to save a trick by playing the eight, but the high trump gave B a trick with the nine as well as the top heart, saving the game.

If statistics are to be believed, there is no such thing as an effective defensive following bid against a no-trumper. The only effect of such a bid—or double—is to warn the dealer that it would be to his advantage to try something safer, or to induce him to let the following bid alone, and save game against it, perhaps after doubling it.

Such is the fascination of the no-trump call to the majority of bridge players that they seem blind to its dangers, and often take chances that expose them to considerable loss. It is the realization of this that has led all our best players to prefer the approaching bid when there is a weak spot in the no-trumper. This approaching bid is one of the outstanding features of the play of the Detroit

team in the 1927 championships in which they not only won 32 matches out of 52 played but had an average gain of  $43\frac{1}{2}$  points a deal in 52 hands winning 3324 points to Cleveland's 1057 each side holding precisely the same cards under the same conditions the game being duplicate bridge

But we are dealing with the following bid after the dealer has started with one no trump. The logic of the situation seems to me to be this. In the first place all no trump calls are mystery bids. No one knows what they are based on beyond a vague idea that the probable distribution of the suits is 4 3 3 3 or 4 4 3 2 or 5 3 3 2. No one can tell the distribution of the high cards. A no trumper may be anything from a solid suit and a re-entry to an ace and two hopes. Consequently any player who overcalls a no trumper does not know what he is bidding against and he must be very optimistic to imagine he has any chance to go game against a legitimate no-trumper. If he is as strong as that and the no trumper is not up to standard he is passing up an opportunity for some nice pickings in penalties.

The immediate consequence of a following bid is to warn the no trumper that it cannot go game and to give it the option on three things to let the following bid alone to double it or to shift. If there is no following bid there is no option and the no-trumper has to work out its own salvation.

There were twelve cases in which the dealer bid no-trumps in the finals of the 1927 championship matches and in not a single case did second hand make a declaration except to pass.

Accepting the general principle that the whole object in bridge is to win game or save game partial scores being of no value eleven times out of twelve if the following bid is

not strong enough to win game, but is reasonably sure of saving it, it is better to leave the no trumper alone. Then you are playing for 50 a trick, against the dealer's 10.

I have been shown many hands that have gone game against a no-trumper, but examination showed they had invariably lost by it. A player made five diamonds with simple honours by bidding diamonds. He would have set the no-trumper for four tricks and 30 aces if he had kept still and led *his* suit.

Any overcall should warn the no trumper that a partial score is all it can hope for, and the position is immediately reversed. It is now the no trumper that is playing for 50 a trick, the overcall for 8 or 9 only.

If the following bid is made by the fourth hand, after two passes, it is usually called "asking for a lead." It tells the second hand that if the dealer is foolish enough to go back to no trumps, a lead of the named suit will save the game. It tells the dealer that he had better shift, or play for penalties. Any dealer that will go back to no-trumps after being overcalled by an opponent, is no bridge player.

It is from these considerations, backed up by the results from an analysis of 1,000 no-trumpers, that I have always insisted that to bid against a no trumper, especially when you have the lead, is one of the worst bids in the game. To double is no better. The inconsistency of some writers on this subject is beyond understanding. One says the bid should be classed among those known as auction crimes. Another says that reports from clubs where auction is played in duplicate, show that it is a loser twelve times out of thirteen. Yet both these writers recommend the player to do it on certain occasions. If one knows a bid or play that will win twelve times out of thirteen, I submit that it is folly to guess at the thirteenth time, especially as

that may be the time you are wrong

If you overcall a no-trumper with a suit, you must be prepared for an immediate lead of that suit. This defence I first advocated in "Bridge Tactics" as one of the results of my analysis of no-trumpers. The theory of it is that the no-trumper is strong in three suits, and weak in the one bid against it. Therefore, it is best to surrender at once the tricks that must be lost in one suit by leading it at every opportunity, and forcing that hand to lead up to the strength in all the other suits.

It is idle to urge that by so doing one may kill a high card in the partner's hand, because any lead one makes takes the same risk, as the no-trump bidder has given no indication whatever as to what high cards he holds. Here is a typical example of this situation and the defence

No 43

♥	K 7		♥	10 9 5 3 2
♣	Q 3		♣	10 6 5 4
♦	A Q 2		♦	6 4
♠	A K Q 7 6 5		♠	9 4

♥ 8 6 4  
♣ J 8 2  
♦ 10 9 8 5 3  
♠ J 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A Q J  
♣ A K 9 7  
♦ K J 7  
♠ 10 8 2

Z bid one no-trump. If A keeps still he will set the no-trumper for two tricks, unless Y knows enough to rescue it with a bid of two diamonds on his absolute bust. Z will have to discard one of each of his three suits very carefully or he will be set three. If A passes and Y takes out, Y can make two diamonds if left to play it.

On the other hand if A bids two spades and Y does not know the proper defence A will win the game if Y leads diamonds by making his two winning diamonds at once and leading a third round for dummy to trump. Dummy then leads a heart and the king is good then or later for the fourth trick and six trumps game. But if Y leads the spade jack A makes two odd only.

The same result is arrived at if Y bids two diamonds as a take out and A then goes to two spades. Y still leads the spade jack as Z still has no-trump strength in three suits. If A is not careful to force three discards from Y by leading out all his spades, he will be set one trick.

If Y bids Z must avoid the common error of going back to no trumps, or of supporting the diamonds when A bids the spades. Here it will be observed that when Y leads diamonds he kills two of his partner's good cards. The lead is a guess. The spade lead is not.

It is astonishing in how many cases a player who does not understand the value of the approaching bid will get hurt if the opponents will only leave him alone. Take this case

No 44

♥ A 6  
 ♣ K 7 6 3  
 ♦ 8 5 3  
 ♠ J 6 4 2

♥ K Q J 9 7 5 2  
 ♣ A Q 8  
 ♦ 9 7  
 ♠ 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 10 3  
 ♣ 4 2  
 ♦ J 10 6 4 2  
 ♠ Q 10 7 5

♥ 8 4  
 ♣ J 10 9 5  
 ♦ A K Q  
 ♠ A K 9 8

Z disregarded his weakness in hearts and bid no trump. If A bids hearts Z at once shifts to spades and wins the game, as he must make three clubs by leading through A. If A goes to five hearts, he will be doubled and set 300. On the other hand, if A takes advantage of Z's no-trump bid to say nothing, he must make five hearts and the club ace, even if Z runs with the diamonds when he finds the spades blocked. Otherwise Z gives A six heart tricks and is set.

Just as a bid of three or four in one playing suit shows fear of the other, and encourages the opponents to bid it, so bidding two no-trumps to frighten the opponents will, on the contrary, induce them to bid if they know the declarer has not 100 aces. Here is an excellent example.

No. 45

♥ 10 7 2  
 ♣ K 9 7 3  
 ♦ 3 2  
 ♠ K 9 6 4

♥ 9 6 3  
 ♣ Q J 10 5  
 ♦ 10 9 7 5  
 ♠ A 3



♥ A K Q 8  
 ♣ 8 6 4 2  
 ♦ 4  
 ♠ Q J 10 5

♥ J 5 4  
 ♣ A  
 ♦ A K Q J 8 6  
 ♠ 8 7 2

Z bids two no-trumps. If this is left in, Z wins the game. A will lead a club and Z will make six diamond tricks. B will shed all his clubs, one heart and one spade, as he must credit the no-trumper with the spade ace. Z leads a heart and after B makes three hearts Y must make his two kings.

But B was a very shrewd player and he argued that as

Z could not hold 100 aces, he must be afraid of the major suits, so he bid three hearts to get a lead. If his partner has a trick they save game.

Instead of leaving the heart bid alone, which could not have gone game, as Y and Z must make all their aces and kings, Z bid four diamonds and was set two tricks. B led the fourth heart, and Z trumped with the jack to shut out A, who must make the ten of trumps and the ace of spades later.

Here is a rather curious instance of a player's frightening himself out of a lead that would have held the no trumper down to the odd trick, instead of giving him the game.

No 46

♥ 10 8 5  
 ♣ A 9 6 4  
 ♦ 6 4  
 ♠ Q 10 6 2

♥ K 2  
 ♣ K 8 5 3  
 ♦ K J 10 9 5  
 ♠ J 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 7 6 4 3  
 ♣ 7  
 ♦ A 7 3  
 ♠ 9 8 5 4

♥ A Q J  
 ♣ Q J 10 2  
 ♦ Q 8 2  
 ♠ A K 7

Z bid no trump and A two diamonds. Z's first impulse was to let A play it. Had he done so, A could not make two diamonds. Of course it was a very bad call, but A attached unusual value to his two kings in side suits. Z figured that A would never venture a two-diamond bid unless he had both ace and king, in which case Z's queen is safe, so he bid two no-trumps.

This led A to imagine that Z had his s e

twice,

with ace-queen of diamonds, so he led a small club. Z took home four club tricks and then made four spades, A discarding two diamonds to guard the hearts. Dummy led the diamond, B playing ace and small, and A made two more but lost two hearts, giving Z four odd.

As already noted, in the twelve cases of no-trump bids by the dealers in the 1927 championship finals, there was not one in which the second hand made a following bid or double. The experts have learnt that lesson. These bids came up at one table or the other in seven of the deals played in duplicate :—

In three cases the no-trumper was left in. In one case his partner should have rescued him, but did not. Fortunately a little bad judgment on the part of his adversaries in the opening lead gave him his contract, one odd. The rescue would have made two odd but would have started the opponents to bidding probably. They could have gone game in either playing suit.

In another case the declarer went game through getting a lead up to him in a helping suit, instead of opening with a playing suit. No-trumpers are seldom strong in playing suits; but often very strong in the helping suits.

In the third case the no-trumper made five odd, but lost the match for Cleveland because at the other table the Detroit player made an approaching bid in hearts, and the honour score gave them the match on points.

In two cases the partner attempted a rescue. In one case because he had a singleton; always bad distribution for no-trumpers, either in the declarer's hand or dummy's. The dealer went back to no-trumps in spite of the warning *take-out and get set*. In the other rescue case, the third hand holding a singleton was left in and went game, winning the match for Detroit.

In two deals fourth hand asked for a lead. In one case



with a diamond to lead another spade through and take a club discard on the third spade. The return of the diamond dropped the queen and a small diamond set up the suit, B overtrumping Y. Then A was allowed to win with the jack of trumps, and on two diamond leads B got rid of two clubs, winning the game. Z could have saved the game by putting up the ace of trumps second hand and risking the club lead, but he wanted to get his club king led up to.

This is Y's fault. Being in a defensive position he should have bid two clubs, with a view to the spades as a secondary bid. This saves the game at once, as three clubs and the ace of trumps leave no room for misplays.

If the second hand is likely to be left in, as when the bid is in a playing suit, the third hand has the lead, and need not show anything if he has defensive strength. This position differs from the last example, in which the diamond call was an invitation for the fourth hand to shift, and third hand would not have the lead. Take this example.

No 48

♥ 9 6  
 ♣ A K 6  
 ♦ A K 8 4 2  
 ♠ Q 9 2

♥ A Q 7 5  
 ♣ 10  
 ♦ 7 5 3  
 ♠ A K 10 8 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ K 4 2  
 ♣ Q 7 3 2  
 ♦ Q J 10 6  
 ♠ J 7

♥ J 10 8 3  
 ♣ J 9 8 5 4  
 ♦ 9  
 ♠ 6 5 4

Z passes and A bids a spade. Without stopping to think

of the defensive strength of his position Y bids two diamonds, which B doubled. If left to play it, Y will be set 300, as A will win the spade lead and come back with the singleton.

Z comes to the rescue with three clubs. A passes, waiting to hear from B, who doubles three clubs, Z passing. B's refusal to assist the spades makes game very doubtful for A, who passes, and Y has nothing to say. A believes in letting the other side play doubtful game hands.

A leads three rounds of spades, B trumping the third with the trey, the usual echo to show three or more trumps. B leads a small heart, A returning the diamond through the denied suit. Y put on the king and tried to exhaust the trumps in two leads, A discarding the heart seven. Failing in this, dummy led another heart, and B put on the king, so as to draw two trumps for one. Then a small heart gave A a trick with the ace, leaving Z three down; 300 lost in either call.

If Y had considered the situation for a moment, when A bids spades, he should be able to see that he must save the game if he has the lead. If B goes to no trumps, Z will probably lead hearts, but Y should save the game with his stopper in spades and four sure tricks.

At some tables A was left in with the spades and held down to the odd trick, Y leading both his kings and then the ace of diamonds to see if Z was echoing. The third diamond Z trumped, and A trumped the club, hoping the hearts were split. Then he led a small heart to get a trump finesse by leading the jack. Y won with the queen and returned the nine, which gave Z a heart trick at the end.

For the present we shall leave out of consideration the informatory double as a following declaration to take the place of a bid, as that is simply a convention, to be discussed later, in connection with conventions in general.

## WHEN DEALER PASSES

As we have already seen, the second hand is in much the same position as the dealer when the dealer passes. The fact that he has a presumably weak player on his right does not always yield the advantage one might expect in the play, because it is probable that the player on his left has a little more than his share of the distributed strength. The one case in which the second hand has a slight advantage is in calling light no-trumpers, although such things are out of fashion since the introduction of the approaching bid.

When we come to the third hand, after two passes, the situation is entirely changed, because this player not only has a weak partner, but a threat of superior strength on his left. A good many mechanical rules for third hand bids have been put forward, such as that he should have at least a trick stronger than for a free bid, and some protection in at least three suits, or at least six tricks if he is going to bid no-trumps.

Third hand bids are usually largely defensive, and useful in showing a lead in case fourth hand gets the contract. In this respect the probability of fourth hand's having a bid must be taken into consideration. They are also useful upon occasion in reopening the bidding for the dealer when that player has a good secondary bid which is just below the regulation free-bidding strength but well worth trying if he gets any encouragement from the third hand.

The most dangerous bid for the third hand is probably a no-trumper, because unless he can win at least six tricks himself there is little chance for game, as a partner who has passed up a free bid cannot be expected to produce more

than two or three tricks although he may have a good secondary bid for a take out

Instead of going by rules for a certain number of tricks to justify the bid the important point is whether it is worth while to show a defensive position hoping that the fourth hand will bid or if it is better to risk the hand being thrown in. The best guide in this situation is one's knowledge of the style of play on each side. If the fourth hand is known to be a speculative bidder show a lead. If the player on your right is a backward bidder he may have passed up a hand that should have been bid and you may be left in by the fourth hand who has just enough to set you but not enough to bid.

Here are some examples from championship play that show what experts consider good enough for a third hand bid after two passes

♥ Q x	♥ x	♥ x
♣ x x	♣ K x x	♣ A x
♦ A 10 x x	♦ A K Q x x x	♦ A Q 10 x x
♠ Q J 10 x	♠ x x x	♠ Q J 10 x x
One spade	Two diamonds	One spade

In the first example the fourth hand had a heart bid. The dealer denied the spades with three clubs second hand assisting the heart contract which was set for one trick. At the other table the hand was thrown in without a bid as it should have been.

In the second example fourth hand overcalled with two hearts and was set. At the other table third hand did not bid the diamonds but his partner put in a secondary spade bid when the diamond hand doubled hearts. Second hand assisted the hearts and then third hand bid his

diamonds, overcalled by three hearts, which was set. The three diamond contract would have been set.

In the third example, fourth hand doubled a spade, holding five to the ace king, no diamonds. Second hand answered with two hearts, and third hand rebid the spades, instead of showing his second suit, diamonds. Fourth hand doubled again, and the dealer then bid diamonds, and the two red suits kept at it until they got up to five hearts, which they made, thanks to a bad opening lead from a tenace. The spade queen lead would have set the contract two tricks.

♥ Q J x	♥ Q 10 x x	♥ J 10 x x
♣ A x x	♣ A x x x	♣ A Q J x
♦ A Q J 10 x	♦ A Q	♦ 10 x x
♠ A x	♠ x x	♠ Q x
One diamond	One N-T or club	One club

In the first of these, the partner held the singleton king of diamonds, four of each of the other suits, and bid no-trumps on distribution, winning the game. Both tables bid the same way.

In the second example, the third hand bid made no difference, as the dealer had a good secondary heart bid. Had third hand passed, the hand would have been thrown in. Both tables went game in hearts. Cleveland bid no-trump, Detroit the club.

The third example is a case of showing a lead, expecting fourth hand to make a bid. This hand was played at nine tables in a duplicate match, but only two players bid a club third hand after two passes. At all the other tables the hand was thrown in, fourth hand refusing to reopen the bidding. Here is the distribution.

No 49

♥ J 10 3 2  
 ♣ A Q J 6  
 ♦ 10 9 3  
 ♠ Q 3

♥ Q 6  
 ♣ K 8 4  
 ♦ J 8 7 2  
 ♠ A 9 4 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A 9  
 ♣ 7 5  
 ♦ A K 6 5 4  
 ♠ J 8 7 5

♥ K 8 7 5 4  
 ♣ 10 9 3 2  
 ♦ Q  
 ♠ K 10 6

Z and A passed Y bidding a club and B a diamond Z then bid a heart, and they carried the bidding up to three hearts, Z going game, with simple honours

A led a diamond at one table, and B returned a small spade A came back with another diamond to force the declarer, who trumped and led a small spade Dummy led the jack of trumps to coax a cover Not getting it, and with nine trumps between the two hands, Z put on the king and led a small trump, knocking the ace and queen together After that the club finesse was easy, leading the nine from Z's hand, four odd and game

Fourth hand, after three passes, should be strong enough to win the game if partner has as good as two tricks anywhere If there is no probability of game it is unwise to risk opening the bidding Many a player has had cause to regret a speculative fourth hand bid, which has forced him to go on bidding until he reached the danger line

Here are some examples of fourth hand holdings, all from championship play.

♥ Q x	♥ K x x	♥ x x x x
♣ K Q x x	♣ A x x	♣ A K Q J x x
♦ Q x x	♦ K J 10 x x x	♦ A K
♠ A x x x	♠ Q	♠ x
No bid	No bid	No bid

The third example looks as if it should be good for two odd against any holding but partner would have to produce three tricks to get game in a helping suit. Those who opened the bidding with this hand lost five odd in spades. This was the distribution. Fourth hand bids a diamond, Z a spade

No 50

♥ A 7	♥ K 8 5 2	♥ 9 6 4 3
♣ Q J 9 5 3	♣ 10 8 7 6 4 2	♣ A K
♦ 10 9 7 2	♦ None	♦ A K Q J 5 3
♠ Q 2	♠ A 9 4	♠ 3
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">                     Y A                  B                     Z                 </div>	
	♥ Q J 10	
	♣ None	
	♦ 8 6 4	
	♠ K J 10 8 7 6 5	

## THE PARTNER

Auction bridge is probably more than any other game a partnership game. Unless the partners understand each other and act upon that mutual understanding, each of them might be said to have three adversaries. Your own partner can, upon occasion throw you down harder than both of your opponents.

Third hand is undoubtedly, on the average, the worst played position in the game, and more tricks are lost by injudicious third hand calls than all the others put together. This is because the average player is continually bidding on his own cards, forgetting that his partner has already bid on part of them.

To make the following terminology clear, let us call the first bidder the dealer and third hand the partner. If the second hand is the actual first bidder, and fourth hand the partner the same principles apply. It is only when the third or fourth hand is the first bidder that the situation changes on account of the inference of added strength in those hands.

More than any other player at the table, the partner bids on distribution. Without a thorough knowledge of how that affects the bidding he is usually guessing instead of knowing.

To be a good partner the player must thoroughly understand the principles that govern all free bids by the dealer, and what the dealer expects from him, whether second hand puts in a bid or not. These principles may be briefly reviewed.

When the dealer makes a free bid of one in a suit he wants to know if his partner has what is called "normal support" in that suit, irrespective of what else he may



have Normal support is three small cards, or two, one of which is as good as the queen

When the dealer starts with a free bid of two in a suit he does not care about normal support in that suit itself, but wants support in the plain suits

When he starts with a bid of one, and rebids the same suit, he has at least one extra sure trick outside the suit named, and each time he rebids the same suit he indicates another extra trick in plain suits

When he bids one suit and then shifts to another, if the higher ranking suit is named first, both are sound free bids. But if he names the lower ranking suit first, the second suit named is not a sound free bid, but is desirable for the trump. This usually applies to bids in helping suits first and then in a playing suit. If the playing suit is bid first it is usually rebid unless the partner has denied it, or the helping suit is one of five cards and the partner has refused to assist the suit first named

With these principles in mind the partner should know what to do in response to any variety of calling by the dealer. Several of these responses have already been dealt with in the chapter on Suit Bids. We shall start with the responses to suit bids in this chapter, going more into details

The first and the most important matter is the normal trump support, because unless the partner has that he never has an assist for a free bid of one, but he may have a good shift to some other suit or to no-trumps. Therefore, if the second hand interposes a bid the partner who is failing in normal trump support must either pass or shift

If there is no second hand bid and the partner has thus normal trump support, he simply passes, and thus passing shows the dealer that no matter how weak his partner's hand otherwise it has what he wants in the trump suit

But if the second hand makes no bid, the first thing for the partner to do, if he is failing in this normal trump support, is to "deny" the suit by calling any five-card suit, regardless of its value, or the higher ranking of two four card suits, or by going to no trumps, if strong in the three other suits and without a singleton in the hand. In these days of frequent four-card suit bids this denial is vital.

If second hand passes, and the partner has normal support in the dealer's suit, he should never shift unless he has a better call than anything the dealer could bid only one on. This may be a suit in which he is long and strong enough to disregard the possibility that the dealer is weak in it, or it may be such a distribution as to suggest no-trumps. Otherwise whatever strength the partner holds should be held in reserve for a supporting bid if called upon to make one when the fourth hand enters the bidding.

It should be noted that it is most important that the dealer should be able absolutely to rely upon his partner for at least normal support in the trump suit, if he passes when second hand says nothing. This support guaranteed, the next thing to see about is the strength necessary for an assist if the second hand puts in a bid. This requires a thorough understanding of the fact that a certain number of the tricks in the third hand are discounted by the dealer's bid.

When the dealer bids one in anything, he undertakes to win seven tricks, but it is very rarely indeed that he has those seven tricks in his own hand. Consequently, he is depending on his partner to make up the deficiency; but he does not wait for his partner to bid it. He bids it for him. He includes those tricks in his own bid, just as if he saw them in his partner's hand. This is the thing that so few average players grasp.

As the average free bid of one is based on the holding of not more than four or five tricks, the dealer must be depending on his partner for two or three in order to fulfil his contract. If the dealer holds four only, and is compelled to undertake to win at least seven, he must either pass without a bid or depend on finding three tricks in his dummy. If his partner has those three, by adding them to the dealer's four we get seven, and that is the contract.

The important point, therefore, is to remember that three of the tricks in the partner's hand are discounted by the dealer's bid, and for the partner to increase the contract to eight, when he has only three tricks, or less, is bidding the hand twice over and deceiving the dealer at the same time.

E. V. Shepard has given us a very simple rule by which the partner can measure up his hand in order to know just when he may put in an assisting bid. The number of times the dealer bids the same suit, counting the free bid as one and any rebids as one each, added to the number of tricks in the partner's hand that would justify an assist must always be a total of five.

If the dealer bids one heart, for instance, second hand one spade, the partner should have four tricks to assist the hearts.

If the dealer bids 1, partner passes with 3 or less

If the dealer bids 1, partner assists with 4

If the dealer bids 2 partner assists with 3

If the dealer bids 3 partner assists with 2

If the dealer bids 4, partner assists with 1

These refer to bids that start with one and are afterwards rebids. The assist is never necessary unless the second hand puts in a bid. Suppose the dealer bids a heart, second hand a spade. If third hand holds only three tricks he passes. But if the dealer rebids the hearts, and

second hand says two spades, the partner can assist hearts once with three tricks. This tells the dealer that he may rely with absolute confidence on his partner's having exactly three tricks, together with normal trump support, because if he had had four he would have assisted the first time, and if he did not hold three he would not assist now.

In order to arrive at the value of the partner's hand two things must be taken into consideration: the winning cards in plain suits, and the number and usefulness of the trumps. Either the double-valuation system or the Culbertson method may be used for the plain suits. The trumps, however, have a value all their own, which is quite distinct from their value in the dealer's hand, provided any of them can be made separately from the dealer's.

That this is true will be evident if we consider the dealer to hold the five highest trumps. These are good for five tricks, no matter how made, whether by leading trumps five times or by trumping some plain suits, or both. But if dummy has three trumps and can trump a plain suit, the dealer's five trumps remain intact, and the combined hands take six tricks with their trumps, instead of five only.

This consideration gives us the key to the correct play of a great many hands after the cards are laid down, and is the basis of the maxim, "When dummy cannot trump anything, always lead trumps." The contrary is obvious: "Never lead out dummy's trumps if dummy can trump anything first."

The value of the partner's trumps varies with their number and the number of cards in one of the plain suits. If there are two equally short suits, only one is reckoned for.

Taking first the trumps at their intrinsic value

Three small trumps, or normal support, Q x, K x, or A x, have no value. But for every trump more than three, add one trick value.

Holding three trumps, add half a trick value for only two cards in a plain suit. Add one trick for a singleton in a plain suit, and add two tricks for a missing suit.

If there are four or more trumps in the hand double these values, counting one for a two-card suit, two for a singleton, and three for a missing suit.

These values are cumulative, so that five trumps and a singleton would be counted as two for the extra trumps and two more for the singleton, the extra length being valuable as taking the place of what would otherwise be losing cards, and also in enabling the dealer to exhaust the adversaries more easily. All through these valuations, a "half trick" simply means that it is a probable trick, half the time it will win and half the time it will not.

The besetting sin of the average bridge player is assisting when he has not the cards to justify it, and there is no bridge player who has not been many times the innocent sufferer from partners who are afflicted with this vice. Some players seem obsessed with the idea that if they have an ace, that is all their partner needs, and I have seen countless instances of third hand assisting with nothing else in the hand and sometimes assisting two or three times, with the idea of 'pushing up' the opponents.

Their theory seems to be that if the other side goes on bidding no harm is done, or if they do not, at least they will never go game on that hand. These push-'em up players seem to forget that if the other side know they can *safely go on they will gladly do so, but as soon as they have gone as far as is safe they will stop and double*.

One of the most common excuses for bad assisting is numerical superiority in trumps, without regard to what

can be done with them. Such partners do not seem to have grasped the axiom that trumps are of no use to the player who cannot trump anything.

This is a question of distribution as applied to the plain suits. Compare the following third hand holdings, the dealer bidding one heart, second hand a spade. The valuations are given in both systems. In the actual games the players who held these hands assisted twice on each of them.

♥ x x x  
 ♣ Q x x  
 ♦ J x x  
 ♠ A x x  
 D 2, C 2

♥ x x x x  
 ♣ Q x x  
 ♦ J x x  
 ♠ A x x  
 D 3, C 2½

♥ x x x x  
 ♣ Q x x  
 ♦ J x x  
 ♠ A x  
 D 4, C 4½

It is only in the last example that the trumps are of any use beyond making it easy for the dealer to exhaust those in the hands of the adversaries. In the first and second examples they will all fall on the dealer's trumps.

The first example is not an assist until the dealer rebids twice, making 3 calls in all. The second example is good for an assist after one rebid. The third example should assist at once.

Now take some stronger hands, one heart bid by the dealer, one spade by second hand.

♥ x x x  
 ♣ x  
 ♦ A K x x  
 ♠ A x x x  
 D 6, C 6

♥ x x x x  
 ♣ A x x x  
 ♦ A K x x x  
 ♠ None  
 D 9, C 8½

♥ x x x x  
 ♣ A x x x  
 ♦ K Q x x  
 ♠ x  
 D 6, C 6

It should be noted that in the first example opponents having bid the spades the ace does not double in value, as it is in the defensive class, but the singleton is equal to

a king, because a trump will win the second round of that suit just as effectually as the king would

That is why I always advise beginners to put a trump alongside a singleton, so as to remember to count it at king value when they are figuring on an assist

These hands are all strong enough to assist three times, even if the declarer never rebids the hearts. In the second example, it is highly improbable that the opponents have enough to carry on the bidding beyond three spades, so this hand might be bid to whatever limit is necessary. In the third example we have a distribution that is good for three assists on either system of valuation. Culbertson counts each sure trick and a fourth card in suit as  $1\frac{1}{2}$ , the double valuation as 2 each, but only one for the singleton, as compared to the Culbertson two

The first example came up in a duplicate game, the distribution being as follows

No 51

♥ 8 3 2  
 ♣ 5  
 ♦ A K 9 4 3  
 ♠ A 8 6 4

♥ J 4  
 ♣ A K 3  
 ♦ Q 10 2  
 ♠ K Q J 7 5

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ Q 9 7  
 ♣ Q J 8 7 2  
 ♦ J 5  
 ♠ 10 9 3

♥ A K 10 6 5  
 ♣ 10 9 6 4  
 ♦ 8 7 6  
 ♠ 2

Z bid a heart. Some players do not think this strong enough for a heart bid except in duplicate play. Z will miss something if he does not show the two sure tricks

while it is cheap to do so A bid a spade With his six tricks, Y is ready to assist hearts three times, and A is ready with his eight tricks to rebid twice so they get it up to four hearts B having no assist, and Z nothing more to say after his original call

A led the king of clubs to have a look and then the spade king, which dummy won As dummy has counted on his ability to ruff clubs as part of his assist, he must be allowed to do so as far as possible, so he returns a small spade for Z to trump, and Z gives dummy another ruff Again dummy leads a small spade and again Z gives him a ruff in clubs

Now dummy leads the trump and Z gets two rounds Failing to drop the queen, he leads a diamond and makes dummy's ace king The third diamond goes to A Now Z must save his ten of trumps and win the game, showing that the valuation of dummy's assisting hand was correct to a trick

Here is an example of the other side of the picture a bad assist and its result

No 52

♥ 7 4 3  
 ♣ 10 8 7  
 ♦ 10 5  
 ♠ K Q 10 9 8

♥ Q 9 2  
 ♣ 9 2  
 ♦ A K J 4 2  
 ♠ A 7 4

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 10 8  
 ♣ A K 6 5 4  
 ♦ 8 3  
 ♠ 6 5 3 2

♥ A K J 6 5  
 ♣ Q J 3  
 ♦ Q 9 7 6  
 ♠ J



Z bid a heart and A two diamonds, Y assisting the hearts. B did not see any use in pushing a helping suit, and if A had two tricks for defence, that ought to save the game with B's two in clubs, so B passed.

A led his two winning diamonds, getting an echo from B, which indicated that although dummy could trump, B could over-trump, which he was ready to do, but dummy discarded a club instead. B trumped with the eight and made his two clubs, getting an echo from A. The student of tactics will observe that this down-and-out echo is never used by experts unless they mean that it is "safe" to lead a third round of the suit. B reads the echo to mean just what his own meant—that A can beat dummy's best trump.

A trumped the third club with the nine and laid down his ace of spades before doing anything further. Then he led the fourth diamond, which B trumped with the ten. Now there is no way to shut off A's queen of trumps when B leads the fourth club.

All that Z can make out of the hand is four tricks, so he is set for 200, but is thankful they did not double. All this is due to Y's assisting a one bid with only three tricks in his hand at the most liberal valuation.

At other tables Y passed the two diamond bid, waiting for Z to rebid his hand. B felt it necessary to deny the diamonds with three clubs, and when Z passed A thought that with the hearts stopped and no word from Y he would try three no-trumps.

Y led the heart and Z finessed the jack. A took the trick and led the nine of clubs, which B ducked, to clear the suit. This let Z make his four hearts, setting the contract for one trick, instead of being set for 200.

The careful players who held A's cards did not bid the diamond. They figured it very improbable that they could go game in that suit unless B had something better, such

as a spade call, but with two diamond tricks, one spade and a trump trick, they ought to save game, if B had nothing. This put Z down 150.

The denial of a suit sometimes leads to interesting situations. Take this case

No 53

♥ A K 9 4  
 ♣ 8 7 4 2  
 ♦ Q J 10 4  
 ♠ 4

♥ 10 3  
 ♣ J 6 3  
 ♦ 8 7 3  
 ♠ Q J 10 8 5

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ J 7 6  
 ♣ K 10 9  
 ♦ A K 9 6 2  
 ♠ 6 2

♥ Q 8 5 2  
 ♣ A Q 3  
 ♦ 5  
 ♠ A K 9 7 3

Z bids a spade, and when A passes, Y denies the suit with two hearts, which B passes. Z jumps the bid to three hearts, to show Y that he has four trumps and good assistance for hearts. *This seems to be the best use to which the jump bid can be put, showing sound assistance in plain suits, and also four trumps, the four trump feature being the only justification for the jump, and very useful when the bid is on a four-card suit, as it indicates eight trumps between the two hands, just as if the dealer had five and the partner three, and there was no jump.*

The shifting of values in Z's hand when his suit is denied is worthy of notice. His hand was worth six tricks according to the double valuation system with spades trumps. It is still worth six as a heart assist. The spades

According to the double valuation system, Z's hand is worth three tricks only and is not a bid. According to the Culbertson system it is worth  $6\frac{1}{2}$  with clubs trumps. According to the way players bid this hand the results were many and various.

When Z bid the clubs whether for two or three A promptly bid no trumps. Z's call being a free bid Y led the club and A made five odd by getting rid of his two top hearts and putting dummy in to give him two spade discards on the queen and jack.

When Z passed without a bid, two very different endings were reached. At one table A cautiously made an approaching diamond bid, Y and B passed, and Z bid two clubs. No one having mentioned spades A bid two no-trumps, and it was Y's lead.

Y in this case happened to be a player who knew the response to secondary bids, and started with the jack of spades, which Z won with the ace, returning the queen. Y overtook the queen for fear Z had not another spade, and these five tricks saved the game instead of losing five odd.

At another table A happened also to be familiar with the management of secondary bids, and when Z bid two clubs over his diamond, he knew from his own cards that Y could not hold two honours in clubs and would not lead that suit, but would try something else, probably a spade. This being so A passed, to see what B would do. Y put in a two spade bid, and B went to three diamonds. Z has no spade assist, and passed. A jumped the diamond bid to four and made a little slam, through Y's opening the singleton, hoping for a ruff, instead of the spade, which would have saved the slam but not the game.

A constant mistake in assisting bids is in over-estimating the value of trump holdings in themselves, without stopping

to consider what can be done with them, besides following suit

No 59

♥ A 6  
 ♣ J 10 9 4 3  
 ♦ 7 6 2  
 ♠ 9 7 4

♥ K Q J 8 2  
 ♣ 8 6  
 ♦ A Q J  
 ♠ 10 8 3

	Y	
A		B
	7	

♥ 9 7 5 4  
 ♣ 7 2  
 ♦ 10 9 4  
 ♠ K Q J 5

♥ 10 3  
 ♣ A K Q 5  
 ♦ K 8 5 3  
 ♠ A 6 2

Z bid a club, A one heart and Y two clubs. This is an error as his hand is worth only three tricks and he should have waited for a rebid or a secondary bid from Z. When B went two hearts, Z passed, but Y put in a third club bid, B passing and waiting for A to speak.

A estimated that his partner's assist must have been on some spade strength, with at least three hearts, or ace and small, and a double seemed to offer better results than pursuing the hearts. In this he was correct, as the tables that went on with the hearts could not make more than three odd, whereas the double put Z down for 200, less five honours.

Dummy won the first heart lead and took out two rounds of trumps. Then he led a heart to clear the decks for a ruff, and to see what the adversaries would do next. A won the heart and led to his partner's inferred spade suit, forcing the ace. Z then tried a small diamond, hoping to make the king later, but A won with the queen and led

another spade and then the diamond came through and A made ace and jack six tricks. Had Z held up the spade ace, B would have switched to the diamonds with the same result.

Compare this over estimate of trump values with this case

No 57

♥ J 10 6 2  
 ♣ 9 6 5  
 ♦ A Q J 4  
 ♠ J 8

♥ None  
 ♣ A Q 10  
 ♦ 10 9 6 5 3  
 ♠ A K 9 6 5

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 7 5 3  
 ♣ 8 7 4 3 2  
 ♦ None  
 ♠ 10 4 3 2

♥ A K Q 8 4  
 ♣ K J  
 ♦ K 8 7 2  
 ♠ Q 7

Z bid a heart, A a spade, and Y jumped the bid to three hearts, showing four tricks for an assist and at least four trumps. B looked over his near Yarborough and passed, so the hand was played at three hearts.

At some tables Z was fortunate enough to get a club led by A after that player had made his two top spades. By leading the ace and ten of clubs A hoped to get a lead from Z up to B, and if B had a trick the game was saved. The king of clubs, five trumps and four diamonds gave Z the game.

At other tables, after two winning spades, A looked over the diamonds in dummy and his own hand and concluded that if B had a trick anywhere, it might be the king of diamonds, so A led one. B trumped it and returned a

club, which A won and gave B another ruff, winning another club trick and giving B one more ruff. This set the heart contract for three tricks instead of losing the game. This looked like a winner until the scores were compared with those made at two of the tables.

At both of these B was a player who understood how to value an assisting hand on account of the missing suit and four trumps so he bid three spades, and when Z went to four hearts A jumped the bid to five spades and made a grand slam. This was done by trumping the first heart lead, and ruffing dummy with a diamond. Two club finesses gave dummy two more ruffs, but then A had to trump a heart as Z was marked out of clubs, and B got the fourth ruff. Trumping himself in again, A dropped the trumps in two leads and made the last tricks with his established tens.

The careful play on A's part in observing that while Z might put in the jack of clubs second hand, holding K J ♣, he would certainly not play the king the second time if he had a guard to it, knowing his partner had not the ace.

The partner's duties with regard to no-trump bids by the dealer are all governed by a simple negative rule.

Never assist a no trumper.

The reason for this rule is that you do not know what you are assisting. As already pointed out, all no-trumpers are mystery bids. If the player on your right overcalls your partner's free bid in no-trumps, you have the choice of two things—to double if you can surely stop that suit twice or to bid a good suit of your own. Otherwise pass if you are not strong enough to double or bid.

You gain nothing by going two no-trumps, as the dealer can do that if you double. He knows what he has, you do not; and if you go on with the no-trumper you

Z bid no-trump, A two hearts, expecting an immediate assist to the no trumper by Y, but unfortunately the no trumper got a two-spade take-out instead. When B passed the dealer went back to no trumps, so as to get the heart lead up to the tenace in the concealed hand, instead of having it led through.

A was getting ready to lead out his six clubs when Y went on to three spades, B passing again. With this assurance of greater strength than a rescue bid in Y's hand, Z went on to three no-trumps. This time Y passed, and A was rejoicing at the unexpected success of his scheme when B put in a bid of four hearts!

Thus, of course, Z doubled. To call the club at this stage would be only making matters worse, so A had to take his chances on the hearts. As the heart was the original overcall of Z's no-trumper, and as Z's hand was still of no-trump make, Y followed the rule and led his top heart.

Z put on the ace and returned a small diamond. Y played the ace and returned the queen, which Z overtook and led two more, but A refused to part with the king of trumps, so Y trumped the fourth diamond and led a spade. B jumped in with the ace and led a trump. Z ducked, as A is marked with the lone king, and at the end Z made the queen. These six tricks put the fake bid down for 600, less simple honours.

While it is invariably bad policy to assist no-trump bids, unless you have a no-trumper yourself and are sure of game, regardless of what you may find against you, it is very important on the other hand to deny proper assistance or distribution for no-trump contracts. This is called a take-out, and several examples have already been given.

Players seem continually to overlook the simple fact that the dealer can always go back to no-trumps, if he

wishes to without increasing the contract and that in all cases whether overcalled by partner or adversary the decision as to going on should be left with him as he alone knows what he holds. But such is the prejudice in favour of playing no-trumpers at every opportunity that it is difficult to convince some persons that just as weakness in a suit suggests denying that suit so weakness in high cards which is the stuff no trumps are made of should suggest denying high cards, when the partner does not hold any.

A still more common reason for denying no-trumpers is distribution. Just as a no-trumper should never be bid on a hand containing a singleton, so it is invariably bad tactics for the partner to leave a no-trumper in if he has a singleton.

If the dealer's distribution is the best possible, 4 3 3 3, it is 3 to 1 against his having 4 of the suit in which you have 1 only, and if it is one of his three-card suits there are nine of that suit against the no-trumper, which is dangerous. Here is a typical case:

No 59

♥ 8 7 6 2  
♣ 2  
♦ Q J 10 5  
♠ A J 7 5

♥ Q 10 5  
♣ A K Q 5 3  
♦ 7 2  
♠ 6 4 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 4 3  
♣ J 10 4  
♦ 9 8 6 4 3  
♠ 10 9

♥ A K J  
 ♣ 9 8 7 6  
 ♦ A K  
 ♠ K Q 8 2

There is no good approaching bid in Z's hand so he calls no-trump. A passes. If Y passes the game is saved at





through the denied suit, just as he does at the fourth trick in the actual play

B led the ten of diamonds and dummy finessed the jack, so as to keep a re-entry for the hearts. Three rounds of hearts followed, playing for "splits," Y discarding a club. A shifted to the nine of spades, B winning the jack with the queen, and leading another diamond, to avoid the clubs.

On Z's two winning hearts, A sheds his third diamond, marking Y with king alone, and then a spade. Y let go another club and a small spade. When dummy led the diamond, Y led the spade, and made two clubs and the top spade at the end, four odd and game.

At one table A led the club nine after winning with the heart queen. Y ducked and B had to win the trick. The same diamond lead followed, and on the two long hearts A discarded his third diamond and a spade. Y let go the small spade and a club, which gave B a safe discard of a small spade and a diamond, saving the game. What reason A had for selecting the club in preference to the spade is not clear.

The partner frequently gets excellent opportunities for doubling, if he can trust the dealer's bids. Take this case

No 62

♥ Q J 2

♣ 10 4 3

♦ K 10 4

♠ A J 7 5

Y

B

A

Z

♥ K 8 6 5 3

♣ J 9 6 5 2

♦ 5 2

♠ 8

♥ 9

♣ A Q 9

♦ A Q 7 3

♠ K Q 4 3 2

Z bid a spade and A no trump. This is a bad bid on A's part because it betrays the spade situation to Y. If there is any chance for A to win the game against Z's spade suit B must have tricks enough to save the game against Z's spades or even set the contract. It is also probable that Y will deny the spades if A passes which he should have done but some players will never learn to let the other side play the hand when they cannot win the game.

Y passed A's no trump call but B took it out with two hearts on his two suiter and a singleton. Z read A's no trumper for what it was a gamble and he rebid his spades to show his outside tricks. A went to three hearts.

Now the partner gets into the picture. Y knows A must have the spades stopped with the ace at least probably ace jack therefore to justify a free bid Z must have had a sure trick outside spades. In addition to this he rebids his hand showing another sure trick in addition to the one necessary to justify the free bid. These tricks are not in hearts that is a certainty so one must be ace of clubs the other in diamonds.

This being the apparent situation Y doubles three hearts instead of assisting spades and they set the heart contract for 300. As the cards lie Z could have gone game in spades but the double pays better.

Z starts with the usual defence to an overcalled no trumper having all the plain suits stopped and leads a heart. Y wins with the ace and returns a small one. Now even if B picks up all Y's trumps all he can make is a diamond and a spade it being impossible to separate dummy's trumps by ruffing.

In no position in the game is imagination so necessary as in the partner's handling of the dealer's bids when they are overcalled by preemptive bids. Take this case in

which only one player at thirteen tables Raymond Balfe, rose to the situation His partner, the dealer, was W C Whitehead

No 63

♥ 8 6 4  
 ♣ K 4  
 ♦ A Q 10 7 3  
 ♠ 9 6 3

♥ Q J 10

♣ 9 6 5

♦ 5

♠ A K Q J 5 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 7 5 3

♣ J 10 8 7 3

♦ None

♠ 10 8 7 4

♥ A K 2

♣ A Q 2

♦ K J 9 8 6 4 2

♠ None

Z bid one diamond, and A three spades Y five diamonds, which B doubled, as a "free" double probably

Y knows his partner would never bid a diamond on king jack high at the most, except for one reason, that the other suits were too short to bid and the hand too strong to pass

On the play, Z easily makes a grand slam, in spite of A's opening defensive trump lead, as dummy gets a heart discard on the third club

## SAVING GAMES AND RUBBERS

It is to be regretted that an original mis statement of a proposition should have been so widely copied as to have become a popular belief, resulting in the general practice of "saving" games and rubbers, regardless of expense. The average rubber, among good players, lasts about five deals. Among those who believe in "saving" games, it may be anywhere from six to ten.

To begin with, the term "saving" is inaccurate, because the games and rubbers are not saved, but simply postponed. If I pull a drowning man out of the water, haul him up to the edge of the dock, and then find myself too weak to hold on to him, letting him fall back into the water, he is not saved. His drowning is simply postponed.

If the result of a rubber at bridge is postponed, at the cost of two or three hundred points, the next game must be won by the side that paid for the postponement, or lost. If they win it, they have simply recovered the fee they paid. If they turn out to be too weak to hold on, and eventually lose the rubber, they have simply thrown away two or three hundred points for nothing.

The majority of writers on this subject have started from the false premises that a rubber is an individuality, consisting of two or three games that have no connection with the following games or rubbers, and of attaching all the importance to the deciding or final game of a rubber, totally overlooking the much greater importance of the first game.

Some writers argue that the difference between winning and losing the deciding game of a rubber is the 250 points bonus, or 500, according to whether it is won or paid. Others insist that as the average rubber is worth 400 points,

the difference between winning and losing it is 800 instead of 500

This disagreement is due to the fact that the 800 school base their figures on the result of the rubber before there is a card played, and at this stage there is no question of "saving" it the sole object being to win it. The 500 school, on the other hand, base their calculations on the swing one way or the other of the 250 bonus points when the deciding game is about to be played.

Their advice is based on the curious logic that the stronger side should not let you keep them out of the chance to go game unless you will pay a certain amount, usually three or four hundred points and at the same time they tell you you should not pay more than one or two hundred to "save" that game.

All these writers overlook the fact that a rubber is only a few games marked off as part of a long series of games, usually thirty or forty at a sitting and that the last game of one rubber will be followed by the first game on the next rubber, if not to day, to morrow, or next week. They do not even mention the importance of the first game, all their emphasis being laid upon the final game, although it is an established fact that the side that wins the first game will win the rubber, three times out of four.

This has been established not only by experience, and by a long series of records, but by mathematics as applied to chance and probability. This is easily proved if we take any event that may come either of two ways and see what chance there is of its coming twice the same way in two trials. Take a coin which must come heads or tails, call heads, and toss it twice. These two tosses must result in one of these four events

T H

H T

T T

H H

*Govindlal Shrivla*

*Moh...*

Of these four possibilities all equally probable there is only one that will show heads twice so the odds against that double event are 3 to 1

The same is true of the odds against either side winning two consecutive games of bridge, before either of those two games are played. Such being the case as soon as you have lost the first game of a rubber the odds are 3 to 1 against your winning that rubber because that would entail your winning two games in succession

Now, if you pay two or three hundred points in penalties for the privilege of preventing the other side from winning the second game, you are still facing the same odds of 3 to 1 against your winning two games. In other words, you have simply thrown those penalty points away, without improving your position a particle

If you are fortunate enough to win that second game, you pay no penalties, and the other side must have let you play the hand without offering you any penalties to keep you from winning it. Why should they, when they knew it was still 3 to 1 against your winning the rubber before that second game was played?

Having brought the score to game all each side is advised to forfeit three or four hundred points to prevent the other side from winning the rubber, if there is any danger of their doing so. But after having done so and paid the penalty of several hundred points, you are just where you were before, because you have not "saved" the rubber, as it may still be lost, and to come out even you must win the next game

Many a rubber has been won after "saving it" once or twice, only to find that the losers of the rubber were the winners on points. I have personally lost a rubber on which I won sixteen hundred points, playing against two chronic "flag fliers"

If we dismiss from our minds the idea that the rubber is a thing in itself, totally disconnected with other games and rubbers, we shall readily see the folly of paying two or three hundred points in penalties to postpone a result which can turn out in our favour only on condition that we win the next game

If we are not going to win the next game, we have to pay seven or eight hundred points for a rubber that should have been only four or five hundred. If we decide to let that game go, the chances are 3 to 1 that we do not lose the next game also, as that would be a double event. If we do win the next game we play, it will be the first game of the next rubber, and will give us an equity of 300 in that rubber, as it is 3 to 1 that we win 400



## CONVENTIONS

Conventions are declarations that do not mean what they say, and which must be understood by the partner as having a different meaning the partner being supposed to know what that meaning is

These conventional declarations should be controlled by one of the basic principles of auction bridge, which is that the player using them must undertake to do something or other, either to play the hand under a certain contract, or to win a certain number of tricks, or to play each trick at an increased value

Any convention that does not conform to this rule, such as the suggested "I challenge," instead of "I double," is on all fours with the poker player's "I breathe" when he is afraid to bet a chip to start things. If that sort of thing is once admitted we shall soon have such expressions as "Suffering cats!" meaning "Partner, that is the very suit I was about to bid", or, "Great grief" meaning "That stops me from bidding no-trumps" There are already several conventions of this character in common use to-day, which we shall come to presently

The majority of these conventions are founded upon a desire to use some particular declaration that is lying round idle, so to speak. For example. Among good players there is no such free bid as two in a helping suit, because such bids tend only to inform the adversaries and embarrass the partner, therefore that declaration is never used in the sense that two in a playing suit would be used, and is available for some other and purely conventional purpose

There is no such thing in modern bridge tactics as doubling a free bid of one for the sake of penalties, because the penalties would be so trifling that it would pay better to bid and play the hand at your own declaration, if you are strong enough to prevent than from making more than four or five tricks in theirs. If this double of one is never

used with the idea of getting penalties, it is another declaration that is lying round idle

To begin with the bid of two in a helping suit and its uses This convention was W C Whitehead's idea, but he tells me he dropped it because of the infrequency of the opportunities for its use Nevertheless many players like to have it on hand for emergencies when the partner understands it, and some use it to excellent advantage now and then

The convention was suggested by the fact that if the dealer bid a club or a diamond, and the player on his left had a no-trumper but for the weakness in that suit, the convention to use was the informatory double But if it was the dealer that held the potential no-trumper, weak in one suit, there was no warning bid to be doubled In such cases, if the weakness was in a helping suit, the best thing for the dealer to do was to double that suit himself, by calling two clubs or diamonds, as the case might be

It then became the duty of the partner to bid no-trumps if he had the requisite stoppers in that suit, otherwise to bid his best suit Here is an example of how this convention works out

No 64

♥ J 6 2  
 ♣ Q 8 6 4  
 ♦ 10 6  
 ♠ Q J 7 2

♥ 10 7 5  
 ♣ J 7 5 3  
 ♦ A K 8 5 4  
 ♠ 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ K 9 4 3  
 ♣ 10  
 ♦ Q J 9 2  
 ♠ A 8 6 5

♥ A Q 8  
 ♣ A K 9 2  
 ♦ 7 3  
 ♠ K 10 9 4

Any player of the old school, unfamiliar with the theory of distribution and approaching bids, would undoubtedly bid one no trump on Z's cards and would just make his contract, losing five diamonds and a spade. The approach bidder would start with one club, second hand one diamond and Y would probably leave it in, having no idea of Z's side strength. The result would be that both would play to save the game and that A would make two or three odd.

This would have been unnecessary if Z could have doubled a diamond bid on his right. Bidding two diamonds has the same effect if Y understands the convention. A cannot bid three diamonds over Z's two although he understands the convention. All he can do is to double, so as to inform B, knowing Y is not going to pass. Y bids two spades and wins the game unless B utilizes A's informatory double and leads the singleton, stopping the trump lead at once and putting A in twice with the diamonds, which holds Y down to his contract, two spades.

How this convention works out will be evident if we give Z any of the three other hands for his partner. Exchange A and Y and the bid is no trump, winning the game. Leave A's where it is and transpose Y and B and the bid is no trump on two diamond stoppers, winning the game. If the two stoppers are not considered good enough, either of the four card playing suits wins the game.

As the answer to this convention is more likely to be a suit than no trumps, the dealer should be prepared to support either of the playing suits, and preferably with four cards of each. The two-bid is always stronger if it is a singleton.

There is a further use of this convention which many players overlook. This is to bid two in a helping suit in which the partner cannot have stopper, so as to force him

to bid a suit Here is an example

No 65

♥ 9 6 3  
 ♣ K Q J 8 3  
 ♦ 9 4  
 ♠ J 8 2

♥ Q J 10 5 4  
 ♣ 9 2  
 ♦ Q 8 7 2  
 ♠ 9 5

	Y	
A		B
	7	

♥ A 8 7 2  
 ♣ 7 5  
 ♦ 10 6 3  
 ♠ A 10 7 4

♥ K  
 ♣ A 10 6 4  
 ♦ A K J 5  
 ♠ K Q 6 3

Z cannot bid two hearts as that is a playing suit, but he would double two hearts if bid on his right. The only alternative is to bid two diamonds. If Y bids two hearts, Z goes to no trumps, if he bids anything else, Z will support it.

Y cannot stop the diamonds but has no idea that his partner knows that fact. Having no good call in a playing suit, he is forced to a bid of three clubs. It is a game hand in clubs, as all A and B can make is their two aces.

It should be noted that if Z understands the modern system of approaching bids and does not feel like risking a spade call, it does not matter which helping suit he bids, as Y would deny diamonds with clubs. There is no game in spades if B lets the clubs run until Z is out, A echoing to show two only.

Another convention, popularly known as "the Concomitant bid," although why I do not know, is never to bid diamonds except to show four cards in each of the playing suits, neither of them strong enough to justify a free bid. Thus

again, it will be seen is a substitute for the informatory double when there is nothing to double

In case the opponents have already bid a diamond to bid more diamonds has the same meaning as an initial bid of one Take this example

No 66

♥ Q J 8 7 2  
 ♣ 8  
 ♦ J 5 4 3  
 ♠ A 10 3

♥ 6  
 ♣ A K Q 7 3 2  
 ♦ 9 8  
 ♠ J 9 7 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A 10 9 5  
 ♣ 6 5  
 ♦ 10 7 6  
 ♠ K Q 6 4

♥ K 4 3  
 ♣ J 10 9 4  
 ♦ A K Q 2  
 ♠ 8 5

Z who is not using the convention, bids a diamond, A two clubs, Y passing, and B calling two diamonds, showing four hearts and four spades The two diamond call says to A "Glad to know you have some good clubs, but perhaps we can do better in hearts or spades if you will make the selection"

Z passes, and A bids two spades, and can make three All that Y and Z could make would be three hearts

Against the spades we get the old reliable singleton lead under the most favourable conditions, ability to stop the trump lead, and knowing how to put partner in if he does not win the singleton

B over-trumped Y on the third club, Z having established the nine in his own hand Dummy put A in with a small trump, catching Z's eight, and dummy trumped

out the club suit. A trumped the second round of hearts and made the two long clubs and the last trump, three odd.

If Y does not lead the singleton club, A goes game in spades, the play being obvious

One sometimes hears that a free bid of one club is an invitation to the partner to go no trumps. There are two serious objections to this convention. In the first place it precludes any ordinary defensive club bid when that suit is unsupported by other cards. In the second place it is a continual temptation to the partner to stretch things a bit in the no trump response, which sometimes comes a cropper. Here is an example:

No 67

♥ J 10 2  
 ♣ 9 4  
 ♦ A Q J 6 3  
 ♠ O 6 4

♥ Q 9 6  
 ♣ Q 7 6 3  
 ♦ 9 8 2  
 ♠ K J 2

♥ A K 8 5  
♣ 8 5  
♦ 7 4  
♠ A 10 9 8 3

♥ 7 4 3  
♣ A K J 10 2  
♦ K 10 5  
♠ 7 5

Z bids a club, A passes, and Y accepts the invitation and bids no-trump B passing

B leads the spade ten. A playing the king and returning the jack, so that B makes the rest of the spades. A's discards being the "discouraging" deuce of diamonds and trey of clubs. B led the king of hearts and got the encouraging nine from A, so he led a small heart and they

made four tricks in that suit, putting the no-trumper down for four tricks

If Z bids his hand naturally, one club, A passes and Y denies the clubs with two diamonds. B will then bid two spades and will make three odd no more as Y and Z have each shown a suit in which each can make two tricks

There are in common use a number of conventional declarations, which if understood by the partner, are sometimes effective. One of these is a sort of camouflage double of opponent's suit, instead of supporting partner's call. Properly speaking, of course, this is a business double partner having bid, but when understood by the partner as a convention it means, "I can assist your suit, but let us frighten them out of going any further with their suit first. You can rebid your suit yourself." The following is a remarkable example of the success of this system, especially in connection with a correct estimate of the personal equations of the opponents.

No 68

♥ 9 6 4  
 ♣ K 9 7 2  
 ♦ A K 8 6 4  
 ♠ Q

♥ 5  
 ♣ Q J 10 3  
 ♦ Q 7 5  
 ♠ A K 10 8 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ Q 10 7 3  
 ♣ A 8 6 5  
 ♦ 2  
 ♠ J 7 5 3

♥ A K J 8 2  
 ♣ 4  
 ♦ J 10 9 3  
 ♠ 9 6 4

Z bid a heart, A a spade. Y doubled the spade. This appears to B to be a business double, which he cannot afford to rescue, but he hopes it may induce Z to go back.

to hearts, in which B has two possible stoppers. When B passes, Z rebids the hearts, following his partner's instructions. In the face of Y's double, and B's refusal to assist, A passes.

A led the spade king and then switched to the club queen, the king and ace falling. B returned the club and Z trumped it. On the following cross-ruff dummy makes two of his trumps and leads the third. Z makes three trumps by the finesse and Y makes a diamond trick, which fulfils the contract, two odd in hearts.

At all the tables at which the bidding was regular, Y assisted the hearts and B helped the spades, Z passing, as he has no legitimate rebid, and the hand is played at spades, A winning the game. Y led the king of diamonds to show the ace and then the heart, as dummy had no more diamonds. Z led the singleton club, the queen, king and ace falling.

The cross ruff in the red suits followed, the tactics being the same as those adopted by Y and Z when hearts were trumps. When dummy finally led the trump, A made two established clubs losing the last trick to the nine; four odd and game.

Another conventional declaration which is quite popular is to distinguish between the double for business and the double to show some protection in the opponent's suit, hoping partner can go on. It is used in this way. Suppose Z has bid up to three hearts, overcalled by three spades, and Y says, "I double." That means that Y has a trick or two in spades, and if Z thinks he can afford to go to four hearts on the strength of this assistance, to do so. But if, on the other hand, Y says, "I kick it," instead of "I double" that tells Z to let the spade contract alone, as Y knows it will be defeated, probably for substantial penalties.



There is a modification of this convention which is very popular among a certain class of players. Suppose Z goes up to three or more and second hand doubles. If the third hand says, "Content," that means, "Leave the double alone. We can make it." But if third hand says "I pass," that means, "Look out for yourself. Switch if you have anything worth trying."

It is useless to protest that this is unfair, even if the opponents understand it, because it is exactly on all fours with the suggested "challenge" declaration. The object of the challenge is to distinguish between asking the partner to continue the bidding and asking him to play for penalties. The challenge means go on, the double means leave it alone.

In this "kick it" system, as it is called, the "double" takes the place of the "challenge," and the "kick it" takes the place of the double. Nothing could be simpler, as anyone who approves of the challenge system must equally approve of the kick it system.

All this conventional declaring was started with the initial error of adopting the conventional double, a declaration that does not mean what it says, and that must be understood by the partner as meaning something else. This very popular convention deserves a chapter to itself.

## CONVENTIONAL DOUBLES

The double of the opponent's opening bids is probably one of the most abused conventions of the game. The reason it is not also one of the most expensive is because no text-book so far published gives us the defence to it.

According to the laws of the game, doubling increases the value of the tricks won by the declarer, or increases the penalties scored by the adversaries if his contract fails. But convention has given the double two different meanings, sometimes called "positive" and "negative", sometimes called "business" and "informatory".

It is of vital importance that the partner of the player using the double should be able to distinguish between the two. As "informatory" is the term now generally used, it will be used in what follows.

There are to-day twelve forms of the double in common use, with all of which a player should be thoroughly familiar, or he may find himself involved in a guess game. Each of these must be considered in connection not only with the partner's uses of the convention, but in connection with his personal equation. This personal equation is probably the most important part of the whole matter, and is usually arrived at by a study of his cards when he lays down a dummy, or as they fall from his hand during the play.

Here are a few examples from actual play which should give one a line on the personal equation of the doubler.

♥ K x x  
 ♣ 9 x x x  
 ♦ K Q x  
 ♠ J x x

♥ J x x x x  
 ♣ x x  
 ♦ A x  
 ♠ Q x x x

♥ A x x x  
 ♣ Q 10 x  
 ♦ K J x x  
 ♠ x x

(6) Doubling according to your position with regard to the declarer

The foregoing are all informative doubles. The following may be taken either way, but one must be sure the partner understands the system

(7) Doubling a suit for penalties

(8) Doubling a no trumper for penalties

(9) Doubling an opponent who overcalls your partner's no-trumper

(10) Doubling an opponent's bid after having assisted your partner

(11) Doubling after having denied your partner's suit, or refused to assist it

(12) Redoubling as a defence against an informative double

As already explained, the partner must know what is expected of him in any of these various situations. Some of the doubles have conventional answers, and it is assumed that the partner must answer some of them, whether he likes to or not, although it is difficult to find anything in the laws of the game that compel a player to bid if he does not wish to do so.

If it is a no-trumper that is doubled, the conventional answer is to bid the longest suit, or the higher ranking suit if there are two of equal length. The answer to the double of a playing suit is to bid no-trumps if you can stop that suit effectually, or else to bid the other playing suit if you have four cards of it, even in preference to bidding a helping suit of five cards.

In case you hold five cards of the suit doubled, and not more than three of any other suit, the answer is to bid two.

of that suit This puts it up to the doubler to pull himself out Nothing could be simpler, yet some players will bid no-trump on five to the queen

If the double is redoubled, the informatory pass shows the doubler that you hold four cards of the suit doubled, and three of each of the others, none of them worth a bid

The answer to the double by the player who is doubled, or by his partner, is the same under all circumstances, without any exception, to pass

The logic of the situation is very simple If the double of a suit bid is genuine, it shows a potential no-trumper in the three other suits This was the origin of the suit double, and was intended to say to the partner "I was about to bid no trumps, but I cannot stand the lead of that suit" The partner is thus assured that he will find ample support for any four card bid he may have

If the doubling hand is as strong as that, there is not much of a chance for you to go game in anything, and as partial scores are of no value more than about once in a dozen deals, let them play the hand at anything they like, and do not get yourself into trouble by going on with the bidding In each case in which the side that was doubled in the 1927 championships went on with the bidding, they lost by it

If the doubler is not as strong as he should be, his partner may have a hand that he would have bid on without the incentive of the double This occurred four times in the 1927 championships But if the doubler's partner is weak, they are both going to get into trouble Some of the biggest gains at the bridge table are made by letting the doubler get his answer and then doubling it Here is one of the championship deals



(1) Do you double suit bids on one only or do you double two or three and do you double two no trumps ?

(2) If you have already made a bid is your double informative or business ?

(3) If your partner has already made a bid is your double informative or business if the bid doubled is not more than two in a suit ?

(4) Is your double informative only when neither of us has made a bid ?

(5) Do you double no trumps or let sleeping dogs lie ?

(6) Do you double opponent's suit bid informatively or for business, after you have bid no trumps yourself ?

(7) Do you double informatively or for business after your partner's no trumper is overcalled by the opponents ?

(8) If your partner does not respond to your first double, is your second double informative ?

(9) Do you double for business if you sit on the left of a no trumper, and informatively if you sit on his right ?

(10) Do you apply the same right and left principle to bids of two in suit or only to bids of three ?

If these ten points were printed on a neat little card like a menu, each partner could check off those he approved of and then exchange keeping the card by him for reference so as to avoid all misunderstandings.

My experience has been that the players who are so keen on having a proper understanding of doubling situations could have spent the time much more profitably in studying the tactics of the ordinary declarations, assisting, denying, and shifting suits.

I find that the majority of the players who possess sufficient intelligence, skill and discretion to use the informative double confine it to bids of not more than two in suits or one in no trumps and that most of their doubles are bluffs, based on their knowledge of the personal equation of their opponents.

The best players are gradually coming round to see the danger of doubling no-trumpers, which is just as bad as bidding against them. For the one time in a dozen that this gains anything, it stands to lose in the other eleven. The moment you double a no trump, you become the bidder's partner, and warn him of his danger. Then he can shift, or double your partner's take-out or let you play the hand and prevent your going game.

There are some situations in which the personal equation of the bidder has a great deal to do with one's decision as in whether or not to double. Take this situation in which a player doubles the opponent's following bid after having bid no trump himself.

If the no-trump bidder uses the informative double of such cases the following bid is dangerous, as the only result is to drive the no-trumper into a safer contract. On the other hand if the no-trump bidder doubles for business, the following bid is comparatively safe, as it may save the game at comparatively small cost if left in.

That is the argument, in support of which I was shown the following hand by one of our leading players.

No 70

♥ J 10 9  
 ♣ 9 5  
 ♦ K 9 6 2  
 ♠ Q J 10 4

♥ A 8 4  
 ♣ K Q 10 8 3  
 ♦ A 8 3  
 ♠ 8 3

	Y	
A		B
	/	

♥ Q 6 3 2  
 ♣ J 7 6 2  
 ♦ 5 4  
 ♠ K 9 5

♥ K 7 5  
 ♣ A 4  
 ♦ Q J 10 8  
 ♠ A 7 6 2

Z bids no trump If he is a player that doubles informatively it is dangerous for A to bid two clubs because in answer to Z's double Y will call spades and win the game But if Z is known to double for business it is quite safe for A to bid two clubs as it is improbable that he will be set for more than one or two hundred and will save the game

To my mind the defect in this argument is that if A says nothing, all that Z can make is the odd trick at no-trumps, 10 points, aces easy, so why risk being set one or two hundred? It is the old formula if neither of you can go game let the other side try it Don't push them into a bid against which you have no defence

The theory of the conventional double is very plausible It is said to tend to uncover the best declaration for the combined hands when neither would make a bid if left alone This is assuming the very improbable condition that they have a game hand, but not a bid Once in fifty or a hundred deals that might be true

The objections to this double are first that it warns the opponents that they cannot go game in their bid, and probably not in any other, if the doubling hand is strong, second, that if the double is not as strong as it should be, the response by the doubler's partner is liable to get hurt

Theory is all very well but no one is competent to insist on a theory that is not in accordance with the facts Some authorities will insist that it is a losing game to take out no-trumpers with any five card suit when you have a bust As none of them ever tried it for a month or two consistently, how do they know? The analysis of a thousand no-trumpers shows that they are wrong and wrong to the tune of an average of about 50 points a deal The same writers tell us that the informatory double 'is perhaps the most active single agent of aggression in bidding but they never mention the defence to it, so naturally they have never tried it



Let us look at some of the facts for facts are stubborn things. In the 1927 championships at Chicago, two teams of four each survived the preliminaries in which nineteen teams were entered. These eight players are acknowledged to be the best that could be found. They played 52 deals in duplicate, making 104 hands played. They used the informatory double in ten of these deals and the net loss to the doublers was about 200 points. Any one can look up the facts. They are all published in R. R. Richards's Championship Bridge, where every bid and play is given in detail for the whole 104 hands.

Three of these doubles were quite unnecessary. In one, the doubler had a two suiter and should have bid it instead of doubling. He could have gone game in either suit. In another case the doubled side went on bidding in spite of the warning and were set. At the other table the player bid his hand instead of doubling and went game.

Another case has already been given in full, when the doubled side went on bidding in spite of the warning and was set three tricks 150 points instead of gaining 12. In another case the partner would have made a bid whether in answer to the double or not and with the same result. In another case both tables doubled. At one a redouble won the game. Had the bid been left undoubled, it would have been left in and made two odd only.

In one deal only one table doubled. The doubled side went on bidding and lost the match. At the other table the player bid his suit without any doubling and won the match.

If this is the best that players in the championship class can do with the informatory double what can we expect from the average amateur who plays bridge chiefly for amusement?

Some writers seem to imagine that when they have found an attack and used it successfully for a time that it is invincible. I always look for the defence. They give us

all the points about the advantages I have given bridge players the defence to the bid that overcalls a no trumper the defence when a no trumper is in danger of defeat the defence of the plain suit echo and the defence to the informatory double All these I have backed up with the cold facts of actual play not in one or two cases but as the average of several hundred It is the plays that will beat averages that count

I first gave the informatory double to the world in the columns of the *New York Sunday Sun*, of which I was card editor for twenty five years, but I have never used it at the bridge table, and have never yet seen the case in which it gained anything that could not have been gained without it if we except the partial scores that are sometimes secured by getting to play the hand

While the best defence to the double is not to go any further with the bidding against it, that does not mean that one should not double the answer, or even redouble the double, because neither of these is bidding for the contract The redouble is one of the most effective weapons on occasion Take this case

No 71

♥ K 9 4 2  
 ♣ A 7 5 2  
 ♦ Q 10 8 6  
 ♠ 9

♥ A Q J  
 ♣ K Q J 9  
 ♦ A K J  
 ♠ 7 4 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 10 7 6 3  
 ♣ 10 8 4 3  
 ♦ 7 3  
 ♠ Q 10 5

♥ 8 5  
 ♣ 6  
 ♦ 9 5 4 2  
 ♠ A K J 8 6 2

Z deals and bids two spades, which A doubles assuming that Z's hand is good for nothing but spades, in which he is quite correct. But he forgets that Z has a partner. Y knows that A shows tricks in all suits but spades. Y's hand is of the same character, and the only way to show it is to redouble.

What is B going to do about it? He cannot leave the redouble in, or Z might make about five hundred points if he got four odd in spades, so he bids three hearts. Y doubled this, to show his stopper in hearts, if Z wants to go on, but Z was content to play the hand at hearts doubled, and they set it for 300. If A had rescued himself with the clubs, he would have been set 300, as he can make the odd trick.

But if A passes the spade bid, instead of doubling, Y will not deny it, as Z bid two. If he does, A would double anything Y bids. Knowing the rule to make your aces and kings, A would lead the king of diamonds, getting the seven from B and on making the ace, B completing the echo, would give B the ruff after laying down his ace of hearts to make sure of saving the game. This gives Z only three odd and simple honours.

There is an instructive little detail in the play against the hearts that is worth noticing. On the second round of spades, Y discards the club seven. Z quits the spades and leads his club singleton. Y has no trouble in reading it for what it is and goes right back with a club. Then he trumps the third spade and leads another club, which Z trumps, and Y's king of trumps is still to the good. Seven tricks.

Here is a case in which the dealer could win the game at either no-trumps or spades, but the situation developed is better for penalties.

No 72

♥ Q 7 2  
 ♣ K Q 7 3  
 ♦ Q 6 3  
 ♠ K J 6

♥ K J 10  
 ♣ 8 5 4  
 ♦ A 10 9 5  
 ♠ A Q 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 6 5 3  
 ♣ 9 6 2  
 ♦ 8 7 4  
 ♠ 8 5 4

♥ A 8 4  
 ♣ A J 10  
 ♦ K J 2  
 ♠ 10 9 7 2

Z bids no-trump A doubles, probably because he is one of those who believe in miracles, or likes to see the wheels go round Y does not wait for B, as all Y could do after that would be to go to three clubs, a retreat to a lower ranking suit, so he redoubles B is between a two-heart bid and an informative pass This would have put A in a bad way, but he could make four tricks in diamonds As it was B bid the hearts, was doubled and set 400

## CONTRACT BRIDGE

Some ten years ago a form of contract bridge became quite popular for a short time, but soon fell back into the discard. This was because a few ill considered ideas for scoring and play were hastily thrown together, with the result that the game was unbalanced. In trying to make it simply an improvement on the ordinary rubber, they failed to make it at the same time more attractive, and it has taken about ten years for players to realize that contract bridge is an entirely different game from the ordinary rubber, although both contain the same bidding elements.

In what follows we shall call contract "contract," and the ordinary rubber "auction."

There are several objections to contract as now played. One is the preponderance of long drawn out rubbers, which totally unfits it for a club game, where members drop in for a rubber or two before dinner, and may have to catch a train. Another is the danger of the losses on a single rubber running into very high figures, eight or ten thousand points not being at all uncommon. This leads those who cannot afford such risks to play too backward a game and lose by it all the time. Contract is no game for timid players.

The only form of contract which has become popular in the clubs is duplicate, and to call every hand a game in itself, with no rubbers, but adding a bonus if the game is won in a single deal. This allows one to four deals to be played at each table before changing adversaries, and avoids all delay and confusion.

I have frequently suggested that if contract is ever to be a club game, the rubber score and the "vulnerable"

element will have to be abolished. After seats and partnerships are decided each of the four players should have a deal, the scores be made up at the end of these four deals adding a bonus for a game won at any stage nothing for an unfinished game at the end. As soon as the score is settled, it is Table up.

The basic principle of contract bridge is to allow no score toward game below the line in excess of the number of tricks named in the contract. Any tricks won in excess to be entered at a bonus value above the line in the honour column. This leads, of course, upon occasion to deliberately undercalling hands that show no chance for game, as the tricks above the line will be worth much more than those below, should the hand turn out better than expected, no risks having been taken.

On the other hand, the premiums for bidding and making slams are so great that 'slam bidding' is one of the most prominent features of the game, as slams made that have not been bid have no value whatever, beyond the ordinary trick score.

The rules for forming tables, cutting for partners seats and deal are precisely as at auction, but the scoring is entirely different, and "Majority calling" is the rule.

The complete table of scoring values will be found on the opposite page.

## CONTRACT SCORING

## WINNING SCORES

Clubs and Diamonds	20 points a trick
Hearts and Spades	30 points a trick
No Trumps	35 points a trick
Doubling doubles these values, Redoubling multiplies by four	
A game is 100 points, made by trick scores alone	
There is no score for less than four honours in one hand	
4 honours in one hand are worth	100
5 honours, or 4 aces in one hand	150
Winning the rubber in 2 straight games	700
Winning rubber in 2 games out of 3	500
Extra tricks scored as honours	50 each
If doubled on your 1st game	100 each
If doubled on your 2nd game	200 each
Fulfilling a doubled contract, 1st game	50 honours
Fulfilling a doubled contract, 2nd game	100 honours
Little slam bid and made, your 1st game	500
Little slam bid and made your 2nd game	750
Grand slam, bid and made, your 1st game	1 000
Grand slam, bid and made, your 2nd game	1 500

## PENALTIES, SCORED AS HONOURS

On your first game, undertricks	50 each
If doubled, the first 2 tricks	100 each
If doubled, 3rd and 4th tricks	200 each
Your 2nd game, 1st undertrick, undoubled	100 each
Any further undertricks, undoubled	200 each
Doubling doubles these on second game	
1 or the first revoke, take two tricks	
1 or any further, by same side	100 points each

## WINNING SCORES

When one side has won the first game it is said to be "vulnerable" When each have won a game, they are both vulnerable The term is a misnomer, and I seldom use it, as it is really the side that has not won a game that is liable to injury or loss

There is still some difference of opinion as to whether the system of valuing hands and bidding them up that is used in auction will apply equally well to contract The majority seem to be of the opinion, in which I concur, that *more accuracy of information is essential to successful team work at contract* Instead of merely assisting or "putting up" partner's bids, one should if possible, indicate exactly what the assist is based on In bidding for slams, this foundation is absolutely necessary

The first great difference in the two games is that the partner never passes if he has strength enough for an assist, even if the second hand says "no bid" Some players still use what is called a "courtesy raise," just to keep the bidding open, in case the original caller is willing to go on, even when the third hand has nothing resembling a legitimate assist The dealer does not take these assists as seriously as one would at auction

Starting with the principle of keeping the bidding open, the rule for the third hand is to bid the full value of his assist at once, instead of approaching it gradually as he would at auction That is, when he rebids the suit When he shows winning cards in another suit as an assisting proposition, that is a different situation, which we shall come to presently. Here is an example of a full assist.





Any assist no matter what the nature of the call indicates at least normal assistance in the trump suit. When the assist is not a greater number of tricks in the declarer's suit it compels the declarer to go back to his suit, or to show something in his hand that will back it up.

There is one peculiarity in the bidding at contract, owing to the greatly enhanced value of slams. The value of extra tricks in the honour score being trifling as compared to the value of slams and rubbers and the danger of being set not being too great good players either stop at a game bid such as four hearts or spades or they go on to the slam bidding.

There being nothing to gain by bidding five hearts or spades unless to outbid the opponents when necessary, if a player thinks he can make five he may as well take a chance and bid the six. The same is true of bidding clubs and diamonds, and many a safe game in those suits has been lost by a player's reaching out for a slam that he could not quite make. One must bid them to score them.

Another peculiarity is that many players carefully avoid bidding the exact amount necessary to make game, such as four hearts or spades, unless they abandon all hopes of a slam. Such a call is known as a "stop bid." As long as neither partner names the exact number of tricks necessary for game, each is supposed to keep the bidding open for the other. This is because in so many hands there is no opposing bid from the other side, as they are not in any danger of losing the game unless game is bid for. In the example hand just given, the four-heart bid by Y was a stop signal, showing that in Y's opinion it would be dangerous to try for a slam, and five tricks are worth no more than four.

Here is an example of this ace-showing system of building up a bid and avoiding the stop signal.

No 74

	♥ J 6 4	
	♠ K 6 5 4	
	♦ A K 6	
	♣ 7 4 2	
♥ K 10		♥ 8 7 5 3 2
♠ Q 10 8 2		♠ 9 7 3
♦ 10 3 2		♦ J 9 8 7
♣ J 9 6 3		♣ 5
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">                     Y                      A                  B                                      Z                 </div>	
	♥ A Q 9	
	♠ A J	
	♦ Q 5 4	
	♣ A K Q 10 8	

with the jack and led two winning trumps, marking A with the jack and nine left. As A must make one of those trumps, Z must see that he does not make any other trick, or Z is set.

After making the club ace to get out of dummy's way, Z leads a small diamond, discards the heart nine on the club king, and then trumps the fourth club. Another small diamond to dummy's king and Z is in again with the queen of diamonds. Z cannot place the fourth diamond, but he must take the chance that A has two hearts, by leading a winning and then a losing trump, putting A in. If A has no more diamonds, it does not matter who has the king of hearts. This secures the little slam.

It is sometimes possible to show the ace of the opponent's suit, but when that is done there must be no small losing cards with it. Whether the ace is alone, or there is no card of the suit in the hand, the procedure is the same. We have already had a hand showing the value of four small trumps and a missing suit. At contract that hand would have bid the missing suit instead of assisting the spades. Here is an example of bidding up a hand in this way.

No 75

No 75	♥ 10 9 5 4 3	
	♣ K Q J	
	♦ J 10 9 7	
	♠ A	
♥ 8	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;">Y A                  B                     Z</div>	♥ 6
♣ 5		♣ 10 9 8 7 2
♦ 6 5 4 3		♦ K Q 8 2
♠ K Q J 10 4 3 2		♠ 9 8 6
	♥ A K Q J 7 2	
	♣ A 6 4 3	
	♦ A	
	♠ 7 5	

Z bids two hearts and A two spades. Y says three spades. This informs Z that Y not only has good assistance for the hearts, but that he will not lose a single trick in spades. With this information Z does not call four hearts, as that would be a stop bid, but shows his lower ranking ace, bidding four clubs.

When A passes Y bids six clubs, one more than necessary to show that no club tricks will be lost if Z has the ace. With this double insurance against loss in two suits, it is easy for Z to bid a grand slam and make it, unless A tries to save it by a bid of seven spades. They make those bids in contract when the other side is a game in, but it is expensive.

Here is a case in which the third hand denies any aces, but stands ready to show kings. The hand is a good example of the cautious way in which many players approach a no-trump call.

No 76

♥ 5 4 2  
 ♣ K Q 10 6  
 ♦ 6 3  
 ♠ K 9 7 3

♥ 8 3  
 ♣ J 9 7 4 3  
 ♦ 5 4 2  
 ♠ J 10 8

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ J 10 6  
 ♣ 8 5 2  
 ♦ K Q 10 8 7  
 ♠ 6 4

♥ A K Q 9 7  
 ♣ A  
 ♦ A J 9  
 ♠ A Q 5 2

Z bids a heart as an approaching bid, knowing his partner will not leave it in. A passes, and Y keeps the bidding open by bidding two hearts. Now Z begins to show his

aces calling two clubs Y bids three clubs to show the king Z now bids three diamonds Y denies the king of this suit, but calls four clubs to show the queen as well as the king of that suit Z then bids four spades, and Y bids five, as he knows now that Z holds three aces outside his heart suit

With this information as to the clubs promising two diamond discards, Z is sure of a little slam if the hearts drop, and takes a chance on one more trick, bidding a grand slam in no trumps, so as to score his 150 honours A, of course, leads the only suit Y could not support, diamonds

Opposition to the slam bidding game sometimes develops interesting bidding George Reith gives this hand in his 'Art of Successful Bidding'

No 77

♥ 10 8 6 5 3  
 ♣ 8 7  
 ♦ 7 5 4 3  
 ♠ 7 5

♥ K Q J 7  
 ♣ None  
 ♦ K J 10 8 6  
 ♠ A Q J 9

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 3  
 ♣ 9 6 3  
 ♦ A Q 2  
 ♠ 8 6 4 3 2

♥ A 4  
 ♣ A K Q J 10 5 4 2  
 ♦ 8  
 ♠ K 10

Z can probably win the game in clubs if his partner has an ace anywhere, so he bids four A bids five clubs, to show he can win every club led if B will name a trump suit, which B is of course, compelled to do B bids five spades

As Y did not respond to the dealer's ask for an ace, and the calling has already gone beyond the game point, A bids a little slam in spades and makes it, losing only the ace of hearts. Z knows, of course, that A has no clubs and as Y did not show the diamond ace, that suit is hopeless, so it is the heart or nothing. If Z leads anything else he loses a grand slam, but that would give A nothing but 50 above the line extra.

There are frequently chances for slams in one contract that are doubtful in another. Here is an example in which R. J. Leibenderfer held Y's cards, on E. Welzter's deal in a duplicate game of contract at the Cavendish Club, New York.

No 78		♥ K Q 9 ♣ A J 10 5 4 2 ♦ A ♠ J 7 3	
♥ A J 6 5 ♣ Q 3 ♦ K Q J 7 5 3 ♠ 6	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;"> Y  A                  B  Z </div>	♥ 10 3 2 ♣ 6 ♦ 10 9 8 6 4 ♠ Q 9 8 2	
	♥ 8 7 4 ♣ K 9 8 7 ♦ 2 ♠ A K 10 5 4		

Z bids a spade, A two diamonds, Leibenderfer bid four clubs, while every other player with his hand went no trumps. The clubs offer a better chance for a possible slam bid than a no-trumper with a singleton of the adversaries' suit. B has nothing to say.

The dealer is forced to bid five clubs or rebid the spades, and as he has to bid five clubs he may as well bid six,

which he did. A led a diamond and dummy led a small trump. The king won and the return of the trump dropped the queen. The spade jack was covered by the queen as B held the imperfect fourchette. The ace won that trick and a small heart was passed up by A, the queen winning. The spade seven was covered by the eight and the ten won. Another small heart and the ace of hearts is all that A can make.

Owing to the high value of the scores, especially when one side is a game in, the opponents will frequently submit to a severe penalty rather than lose such large sums. When they are not vulnerable the experiment is not so costly. Take this case:

No 79

♥ J 9 7 4  
 ♣ 8 6 3 2  
 ♦ 6 5 4  
 ♠ 10 4

♥ A 8 3  
 ♣ A K Q 9 4  
 ♦ 8  
 ♠ 8 7 5 3



♥ 6 5 2  
 ♣ J 10 7 5  
 ♦ K J 10 9 2  
 ♠ 9

♥ K Q 10  
 ♣ None  
 ♦ A Q 7 3  
 ♠ A K Q J 6 3

The dealer is a game in, A and B are nothing. Z bids two spades. A passes as that is not a game bid and A cannot lose the rubber unless they go to four spades. Y makes a "courtesy bid" although he has no legitimate assist, as he reads the two bid to indicate further possibilities in Z's hand. B passes, for the same reason that A passed. Z bids four diamonds as a feeler, and Y had to keep the



bidding open with four spades. Z abandons all hope of a slam and passes the four-spade bid. Now A stops to figure.

Y evidently has nothing, but Z has shown a hand which is undoubtedly good for the game. If he makes it, it is worth at least 800 points, perhaps 900; counting 100 for the game, probably 100 for honours and 700 for winning the rubber in two straight games, so A bids five clubs. Y passes.

Being vulnerable, and with a partner that has nothing, Z dare not risk five spades, so he has to content himself with doubling the five clubs. A is set 200. Z would have been doubled and set 200 if he had gone on with the spades.

Here is a good sample of careful approaching.

No. 80.

♥ K Q J 9  
 ♣ K Q 3  
 ♦ Q 5 4 2  
 ♠ Q 9

♥ 7 2  
 ♣ 8 4  
 ♦ K 10 9 7 6 3  
 ♠ 7 6 5

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 8 6 5  
 ♣ J 10 9 2  
 ♦ J  
 ♠ A K J 10 2

♥ A 10 4 3  
 ♣ A 7 6 5  
 ♦ A 8  
 ♠ 8 4 3

Z avoids the risky no-trump call and bids a club, the lowest ranking ace. A passes and Y bids a heart, B a spade. Z bids two diamonds to show the unnamed ace. A passes again, and Y bids three clubs, to show the king of Z's first named suit. B passes, as there is no game bid yet, and Z bids three hearts. Y bids four clubs to show the second

trick in that suit, still avoiding the game bid in hearts Z thought they had gone far enough and made the stop bid of four hearts as the spade bid had shut out all possibility of a successful no trumper. This B cannot afford to overcall in the face of A's silence.

Had Z bid no trump originally Y would have had to be willing to bid three to pre-empt and prevent any ask of a lead by B.

It is worthy of note that after the showing of aces, if B had never made a bid Z might have gone no trump, and A would know his only chance was to lead the suit that neither Y nor Z had named, which would have saved the game. That is the chance that players take. When they show certain aces they often deny others. To show the ace of diamonds, for example, denies the ace of clubs.

It will be noticed that as long as game is not bid, the other side can bide their time, because game cannot be scored until it is bid, and optimistic players will often overreach themselves by bidding game when it is not in the cards.

### GOULASHES.

When contract is played as a social game, and sometimes in the clubs, there is an added feature known as "goulash." This is something like a compulsory jack-pot at poker when no one will open. If no one will make a bid at contract the hands are not thrown in, but each player carefully sorts his hand into two suits and the dealer places the thirteen cards opposite him on the top of the thirteen on his left. Then the thirteen from his right hand on the top of those, and his own thirteen on the top of all.

The 52 cards are then presented by the dealer to the player on his right to be cut, without any shuffling, and are dealt out to the players five at a time for two rounds and then three at a time.

The result, as may well be imagined, is to bring out some extraordinary freaks, many hands having only two suits in them and suits of eight or nine cards being not at all uncommon. The natural consequence is that the players take some long chances on slam bids, and their opponents take some equally long chances on doubling. Experience has led many to believe that aces are of no value against goulash bidding.

Contract is a game for those who love excitement, or like to talk about big scores. It has its value as an educator forcing players to value their hands with greater care than is necessary in the majority of the hands at auction. In that game if a player bids one and wins six tricks, he scores them all toward game. In contract he has to bid game to win it. In this respect a partial score is often of value, if in no other way, in frightening the opponents into overbidding to 'save' the game.

In auction, the average rubber, among fairly good players lasts about five deals and is worth about 400 points. In contract the rubbers often run to a dozen or more deals and the average rubber is somewhere between twelve and fifteen hundred points. I have seen two rubbers that cost the losers more than fifteen thousand points, simply because they would not let go while it was cheap.

FOSTER'S AUCTION BRIDGE

## THE PLAY

I have always been a great believer in classification as an aid to memory, and also to any problem of simplifying what are usually regarded as complicated situations.

In the play of the hands, one of the first things to learn is the correct leads from high cards. Instead of asking one to learn what to lead from any of the thirty two possible combinations, which was the rule in the old whist days, I undertook to classify these leads by pointing out that one must lead one of six things an ace, king, queen, jack, ten, or small card. This was first published in 'Foster's Whist Manual' in 1890, and I still consider it a more valuable contribution to the game than the eleven rule, but I have never received any credit for it, although every writer on bridge copies it.

I have endeavoured to follow the same principle in studying the methods of the best players with regard to other parts of the game, especially the play of the hands, and have come to the conclusion that there are only three lines of defence open to adversaries, and that the play of the declarer is also limited to three lines of attack.

It is to the explanation of these principles that the following pages are devoted, with confidence that they will remove many of the difficulties encountered and so simplify the play that any person of average intelligence should know just what to do with any combination of cards that may fall into his hand, whether as declarer or adversary.

It is the custom in too many books on bridge to give examples of wonderful plays, freak deals, and situations which are not likely to come up more than once in a hundred rubbers and probably would not be properly handled by an expert. No one knows just what to do with freak

distributions, because it is all guesswork unless the cards are "stacked," like the Duke of Cumberland hand, or the Vienna Coup

In the following chapters I confine the illustrations to commonplace situations, which are governed by these three simple rules for the adversaries and three for the declarer, because they can be applied to any and every distribution of suits and cards, and distribution, as we have already seen, is the key to modern bridge tactics

It is obviously useless to show a player how to manage a situation that he may not come across in a year's play, and probably would not recognize if he did. The successful bridge player is one who has mastered the principles that make the most out of ordinary, everyday hands, the hands that one holds in every rubber. Almost all the tricks that are lost at the bridge table are lost through not following out the solid principles of the game and trusting to the great law of averages to win in the end.

If you take care of the tricks that can be won by sound play in the general run of hands, the big "swings" in the play of occasional freaks will take care of themselves. To quote an old saying: "What you lose on the swings you will more than make up for on the merry go rounds."

## PLAYING AGAINST SUIT CONTRACTS

As long as the bidding continues, each side tries to convey as much information as possible to the partner, regardless of whether or not it benefits the opponents. The moment the contract is settled this exchange of information entirely ceases between the partners that get the contract, as dummy lays his cards on the table and takes no further part in the proceedings. The declarer can see what he had when he made certain calls, denials, shifts, or assists, if any, and there is nothing more to be told.

The adversaries of the declarer, on the other hand, must still continue to exchange information as much as possible by their play. It is all right to say that a player bid a club, but that does not tell his partner what he had in clubs. One partner may have assisted the other, but that does not say what he assisted on. On the other hand, neither of them may have made a bid, and not only the details but the main features of the hands have to be shown by the play.

Starting with the play against suit bids, this is done in three ways. By the leads, by the partner's response to the leads, and by discarding. All defensive tactics must be carried on along one or more of these three lines.

The first thing is the opening lead. This is made under one or other of three conditions. The partner has named a suit in the bidding, or the leader has named a suit, or neither of them has said anything.

The first rule for defence against suit contracts is to make four aces and kings. If one will take 100 suit contracts and count up the number of tricks in the plain suits made against those contracts, and will also add up the number of aces and kings in plain suits held by the defence,

the totals will be found about equal, usually the number of tricks is the smaller

This would indicate that the only tricks to be counted on against suit contracts are aces and kings in the plain suits. For every trick won by smaller cards some aces and kings are carried home

In the 52 deals played in duplicate for the championship in 1927, there were 75 suit contracts, against which the defenders held 225 aces and kings in plain suits and won only 190 tricks. They held 34 aces and kings in the various trump suits, and won 75 tricks with their trumps large and small. Add together all the aces and kings, and we get 259. Add together all the tricks, and we get 265.

If the partner has bid a suit the proper opening lead is the best card you hold in that suit, because against suit contracts small cards are negligible. What your partner wants to know about is the distribution of the high cards. If you lead the best you have, he can place all the other high cards by a glance at the dummy.

The only exception to this rule is when you are fortunate enough to have an ace king suit of your own. Lead the king of the suit first, and then his suit, so that he may know how he can put you back into the lead if necessary. The same rule applies to returning partner's suit. Show any ace-king suit first.

If you have bid a suit and your partner has not, you should invariably lead the suit you bid, because he may be relying upon you for that lead, and has planned his game accordingly. Let us suppose hearts to be trumps, and you have bid a club, of which suit he has only two. If you make the ace and king and he can trump a third round, he has the game saved if he has any sure trick in trumps. If you lead any suit other than the one you bid, it should unequivocally be a singleton.



In a duplicate game my partner a very good player bid a diamond second and third hands passing fourth hand calling four hearts. Instead of the expected diamond the lead was a small club. Dummy had only two small and I had the ace and ten. That is five cards. The club therefore could not be a singleton unless the declarer held eight of the suit to the king-queen jack.

The majority of those who got this opening concluded that the dealer wanted the diamonds led to him which they did and lost a little slam. I had more confidence in my partner than in my logic and returned the club. The dealer trumped it. The declarer had eight clubs and the five tops in hearts.

Those who depended on the correct play of their partners knew that if the leader had the ace of clubs it would be led at once regardless of whether the suit was headed by ace-queen or not because good players make their aces at the first opportunity against trump contracts. Holding up an ace-queen suit to have it led to you after bidding that suit is bad bridge.

Here is an example of what sometimes happens to players who decline to lead the suit they bid.

No 81	♥ 7 6 5 4		♥ K J
	♣ J		♣ 8 7 2
	♦ J 10 7 5 2		♦ K 4
	♠ 10 9 3		♠ A K Q 6 4 2
♥ A Q 10 3		Y	
♣ K 10 6 4		A      B	
♦ 8 6 3		Z	
♠ J 7			
	♥ 9 8 2		
	♣ A Q 9 5 3		
	♦ A Q 9		
	♠ 8 5		

Z bid a club, A and Y passing, B two spades. Instead of leading his ace of clubs and following with a small one, Z led the nine of hearts "because he wanted the club led to him." Hearts is a suit he knows nothing about, and his lead has not even the redeeming feature of being a singleton.

B won the trick with the king and led three rounds of trumps, dummy discarding a diamond. The jack of hearts was overtaken by the queen, and on the two winning hearts B got rid of two losing diamonds. Then he trumped the diamond and led a club. Z made his ace, but lost a little slam.

At other tables Z led ace and trey of clubs, Y trumping and coming back with the jack of diamonds to dummy's weakness. The king covered and the ace won. Another club was trumped and the queen of diamonds won a trick, holding the contract down to two odd, instead of losing a little slam.

If neither the leader nor his partner has made a bid, we come to the leads from high cards, if the leader is fortunate enough to have any. There are only five possible opening leads from high cards, an ace, king, queen, jack, or ten, and against suit contracts they are all covered by the general rule to lead one of any two "touching" honours.



The king is more frequently led than any other high card, and is always the correct lead if it is accompanied by the next card in value, ace or queen, or both. The continuation depends upon the other high cards that are in the same suit. For example



A K Q x    A K x x    K Q J x    K Q x x

The number of small cards is immaterial. From the first of these, having led the king, your partner knows you have the ace as the king wins. By following with the queen, a card that your partner does not know, you follow out one of the most important maxims of the bridge table.

Never tell your partner anything he already knows, if you can tell him something else that he does not know.

If you have the ace-king alone, follow the king with the ace to deny the queen. Some players, holding A K J x will shift after leading the king, if the queen is not in dummy. This is bad play in suit contracts if partner does not play what may be the beginning of a down-and-out signal on the king, as the declarer may get rid of the suit and trump your ace.

With ace-king alone, the usual play is ace first, to show you could trump a third round if given a chance to do so.

When the ace is not with the king, the partner usually sees the king won by the ace or holds it himself. In this case he will know you have the queen. If that is all, follow with a small card if the king wins, but if you have K Q J x follow with the jack, or play that card if you lead or play the suit later. That is the card your partner does not know.

When a suit is led that is headed by the ace, without the king, the lead denies the king unless that card follows at once. There are four common ace leads.



A Q J x    A Q 10 x    A Q x x    A x x x

From all these if you lead the suit at all, lead the ace, never a small card against trump contracts. With the first combination, follow with the queen to show the jack. With the second, third, or fourth follow with a small card.

The queen always denies both ace and king but is always accompanied by the jack. There are three combinations



Q J 10 \      Q J 9 \      Q J \ x

From the first of these having led the queen if the suit is led again or in playing to a return of the suit, the ten is the correct card. Your partner knows you have the jack. To play the jack on the second round denies the ten. From the others, the play depends on what happened to the first lead. The jack may be the best card, or the jack nine may be second and third best in which case either may be led.

The jack is never led without the ten behind it, unless the partner has bid the suit. To lead an unsupported jack is to throw it away. The jack is also led from K J 10 \ if there is nothing else to lead.



The ten is led from three combinations usually to prevent too small a card winning the first trick and also in the hope that the ten may prove a supporting card for the partner, especially if dummy has an honour.



K 10 9 \      Q 10 9 \      10 9 \ x

The top of the interior sequence may sometimes be taken for the 'top of nothing,' that is a ten high suit, by the partner, and for that reason many players lead a small card from ten nine high suits. This is likely to lead the partner to imagine the leader had a good honour at the top. The cards in dummy and in the partner's hand will often identify the interior lead.

When there is no high card combination to lead from, the only thing is to start with a small card from the longest suit. But a short suit, three cards only, if headed by

seem to think it worth mentioning. The timid player always avoids a trump lead right up the declarer on the ground that it might kill an honour in the third hand. But any lead is liable to do that and the loss of an honour in a plain suit is just as bad as the loss of an honour in trumps. Either is a trick.

The advantage of a trump lead when the hand contains suits headed by disconnected honours is manifest, especially as it informs the partner that he can lead up to dummy's weak suits with confidence. The third hand does not need to try to win the trick because the object is simply to throw the lead.

When the leader's hand is considered from the point of distribution, as every hand should be, there are many situations in which his hand presents a strong resemblance to a no-trumper, but that call is negatived by the opponent's suit declarations. An example of this situation will be found at the end of the chapter on 'The Partner's Responses'.

From this it was only a step to see that if the jack was number 11 and was led nothing would win it. If the 10 was the lead there was some one higher card that would beat it. If the 9 was the lead there were two higher cards out against it and so on. It did not matter what the cards were. Their number was absolutely limited.

Therefore the number of spots on the card led, if deducted from eleven, would show how many cards, higher than the one led, were not in the leader's hand. When N. B. Trist, of New Orleans, invented the term "fourth best," this eleven rule could be applied to suits of any length.

Curiously enough E. C. Howell did not think much of the rule, and I kept it to myself for a time, content to prove its value in play, especially in telling when my partner's suit was established.

When I went to New York in 1888 to give lectures on whist under the management of J. H. Phipps I had the leading points of my instructions printed to accompany a box containing the 32 combinations of cards from which high cards should be led. I wrote to "Cavendish" explaining the eleven rule, and my original way of learning the leads. He advised me to publish them at once in book form, or some one else would claim them as their idea. His opinion was soon confirmed by the information that a woman teacher in New Orleans was doing just that after having been shown my lessons by one of my New York pupils, who wrote to me about it. So in 1890 both the eleven rule and the rules for the leads were given to the world in "Foster's Whist Manual," published simultaneously by Mudie & Sons, London, and Brentanos, New York.

Several persons have since claimed the independent discovery of the eleven rule since the fourth best termin-

ology came into use, but they never gave any account of how they got it. A hint sometimes goes a long way. Almost every writer of the game now uses the eleven rule and my rules for the leads from high cards, regardless of my copyright, and usually without any acknowledgement. They are welcome to it, for the good of the game.

The eleven rule is much more easily applied in bridge than it was in whist, owing to the exposed dummy, but it is often of more value to the declarer than to the leader's partner, especially in his knowledge of how many high cards in the suit are on his right hand and whether dummy can hold the trick second hand or not.

I rarely meet a player who does not claim to understand the eleven rule, but there is not one in a hundred that seems able to apply it rapidly and with confidence. This is because they do not apply it to every small card led, no matter whether it makes any difference or not.

The rule itself is this:

Deduct from eleven the number of spots on the small card led, the remainder is the number of cards higher than the one led that are out against your partner's suit.

Just what these cards are you cannot always tell, but you know how many there are. In bridge, the exposed dummy is a great help. Suppose your partner leads a seven and dummy lays down the queen, eight and deuce, you holding the ace, ten and three. Seven from eleven leaves four, and the four higher cards are all in sight, therefore if dummy does not cover the seven you need not do so, as the declarer has nothing higher.

Suppose you are the declarer and the player on your left leads a seven. Dummy puts down the ace, eight and deuce while you hold the queen, jack and ten. The four cards higher than the seven are in sight, and dummy's eight will win the trick if the seven is the leader's fourth best.

An example of this is given in the chapter on "The Dealer's Play," when he needs two leads from dummy to win the game

It must never be forgotten that the eleven rule is of no value except in connection with the fourth best lead, and that conversely the fourth best lead is of no value unless the partner thoroughly understands the eleven rule. That is why many players never lead a fourth best if they do not think their partners understand the proper use of the rule.

I find the most frequent failures in the use of the eleven rule are in connection with the rules for the leads from high cards, because the lead of a small card carries with it the denial of any high-card combination in that suit in the hand of the leader. Take this case

No 82

♥ A 10 7 2  
 ♣ Q 9 4  
 ♦ 7 6 4  
 ♠ 10 5 4

♥ 9 8  
 ♣ J 6 3  
 ♦ Q J 9 5 2  
 ♠ 9 6 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ K 6 4 3  
 ♣ A 5 2  
 ♦ A K  
 ♠ A K Q J

♥ Q J 5  
 ♣ K 10 8 7  
 ♦ 10 8 3  
 ♠ 8 7 2

Z, A and Y all passed. B bid one spade in preference to no-trump, on account of his four honours in one hand. Z led the club seven and dummy went down. After the hand Y said he "understood" the eleven rule, but on deducting seven from eleven, he found four higher, and only three in sight, one in dummy and two in his own hand,



so when dummy played the trey, he put on the queen, as the dealer must have a card higher than the seven.

This cost the game. B led three rounds of trumps and then his two top diamonds. The next lead was a small club through Z as the only chance to re-enter dummy's diamonds. All Y and Z can make now is the club king and ace of hearts.

If Y had been a player who not only understood the eleven rule, but how to apply it, he would have known that Z could not possibly hold both ace and king of clubs and lead a small card against a suit contract, even if he would not bid clubs on four to the ace-king. Therefore the fourth card that is shown by the eleven rule to be out against Z's clubs must be the ace or the king, in the declarer's hand; and as that is the only card that will beat the seven, why play the Queen?

If the queen is held up, there is no possible way to get dummy into the lead to make those three diamonds, the jack of clubs being killed by the queen. This holds the declarer down to two by cards, instead of giving him five odd and the game.

When B leads the small club, after getting rid of the high diamonds, Z puts on the king and leads the queen of hearts. Y lets it ride, and the king of hearts and the fourth trump is all B can make.

## THE PARTNER'S RESPONSES

Still confining ourselves to the play against suit contracts, we come to the partner's responses to the leader's play after dummy's cards are laid down.

The simplest proposition is when the lead is a small card and dummy does not win the trick. The rule for the third hand is to try to win the trick as cheaply as possible. The old saw about "second-hand low and third-hand high" has led many a beginner into bad habits. Third-hand high does not mean the highest card in the hand; but a high card of some kind as distinguished from a low one.

With any two touching honours play the lower. With king and queen, for example, play the queen. If you play the king and the declarer wins with the ace, your partner will place the queen with the declarer and probably will not lead that suit again.

A card which is not the best nor one of two touching honours may frequently be played on account of dummy's cards. Suppose dummy to hold the jack, and you have queen ten. If the jack is not played, your ten is as good as the queen. If the declarer wins with the ace and the leader has the king, you are marked with the queen.

If your partner is in the habit of leading fourth-best, it may give you the opportunity to practice the application of the eleven rule, so that when you play a no-trumper you will be reasonably expert in its use; but that is about all.

If you win your partner's first lead, the usual rule is to return the best card you hold of his suit, especially if it is a card that will beat dummy. The exceptions to this rule are when a weak suit in the dummy prompts a lead through the declarer, which may save an honour in your

partner's hand. The lead of trumps up to weakness in dummy when there seems to be a prospect of dummy's trumping your good suits is often advantageous. The distribution of your suits is your guide.

The general rule for leading, after dummy's hand goes down, is to lead through the strong suits, and up to the weak ones. Many games have been lost by failure to observe this principle. Take this case, in which nine tables failed to save game.

No. 83

♥ 9 7  
 ♣ K 7  
 ♦ A Q 3 2  
 ♠ K J 10 9 8

♥ Q 8 6 2  
 ♣ A 6 4 3  
 ♦ K J 7  
 ♠ 6 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 10 4  
 ♣ Q 10 9 8  
 ♦ 10 8 5 4  
 ♠ A Q 5

♥ A K J 5 3  
 ♣ J 5 2  
 ♦ 9 6  
 ♠ 7 4 2

7 bid a heart which Y denied with a spade. B led the ten of clubs, A playing the ace. A knows B cannot hold both king and queen of clubs, and there is nothing in catching the queen if Y has that card, as it establishes the jack and gives Y a discard. If A leads the trump, B gets three rounds and must save the queen of hearts for A or make two diamonds, the result depending on whether or not Y tries the heart finesse, as he must try that or the diamond finesse, and the heart finesse must be tried the first time or trust the diamond finesse instead.

The A players who did not stop to consider dummy's

7 bids hearts and all pass A leads the club queen denying both ace and king B plays the eight the beginning of a signal that it would be quite safe to lead a third round of that suit if A got the chance

Z wins the club trick and looks over the possibilities of the two hands If he can successfully finesse the diamonds and also the trumps he can do this alternately and make a grand slam by discarding his losing club on the fourth diamond The first step in this programme is to finesse the diamond A plays the nine The finesse loses and allows B to return the deuce of clubs

There are many players who pay so little attention to the small cards their partners play in their high-card leads that an echo is simply an offering of information to the declarer Persons who imagine they are good players will lead an ace king suit After the hand ask them what card you played on their king and they will tell you it was a little card of some kind a six or a five or something whereas it actually was a seven and might have been the beginning of an echo although it was not But if the card played or led to the second round is the deuce the leader must be asleep at the switch if he does not realize that something higher was played to his first lead

When B returns the deuce of clubs the declarer makes a note of it also but proceeds to get his trump finesse by putting dummy in with another diamond On this trick A drops the deuce and the dealer notes that also

Therefore A foregoes the finesse because if it lost A would lead a club for B to trump and B would come back with a diamond for A to trump saving the game. By putting the ace of trumps right up and leading trumps until the king falls Z is sure that even if one adversary gets in a trump the other will not have a third trump left after the second round. This wins the game against a carefully planned defence.

The third weapon at the disposal of the adversaries is the discard which may be used by either partner. If a suit has not been shown in the bidding but the player is anxious to have it led as soon as possible or to show that he can protect it and allow his partner to discard that suit and keep something else he can avail himself of the encouraging card. This is any card above a six. If there is no such card available what is called a reverse discard is used such as four and then deuce.

This discard is often as valuable a guide to the player who has just won a trick and is in doubt as to his best procedure. We had an example of this in the chapter on Approaching Bids when the dealer bid no trumps instead of feeling his way and third hand discarded the ten of clubs to show the leader that he was deceived as to the position of the spade queen and to put the third hand in with a club instead of going on with spades. The result was to set the no trumper for four tricks instead of losing the game.

It requires close judgment of probabilities sometimes for a player to take a chance on having two discards so as to lay down and out with small cards. Here is a case in which I think the players who took no chances used the better judgment.

No 85

		♥	9 8 6 5		
		♣	10 4 3		
		♦	A J 4 3 2		
		♠	3		
♥	10 4 3			♥	Q 7
♣	A Q 8 7 5			♣	K J
♦	K Q 7			♦	10 8 6
♠	K 4			♠	A J 10 9 6 2
		♥	A K J 2		
		♣	9 6 3		
		♦	9 5		
		♠	Q 9 7 5		

Z passed, not having the supporting strength for a four-card suit bid in hearts. A made an approaching bid of one club, Y passed and B bid two spades.

Z led three rounds of hearts, B trumping and leading a small trump to dummy's king. On the return of the trump Y started an echo by playing the trey of diamonds, expecting B to lead a third round of trumps before he could exhaust Z. This would allow the completion of the echo.

At several tables B did not see the danger of Y's asking for a diamond, and led a third round of trumps, so that Z should not make both queen and nine. This allowed Y to complete the echo and the diamond saved the game.

At one table B realized that the diamond lead must be prevented if possible, and he played the jack to the return of the trump, so that Y's trey of diamonds looked like a discouraging card, and Z went on with the hearts, to let B do the leading. B trumped the heart, picked up the trumps and made all the clubs, discarding three diamonds and winning the game.

With both king and queen in the dummy, Y should have let go the jack of diamonds for his first discard, as he cannot make anything but the ace.

These three defences, correct leading, proper responses by the third hand and discarding, are all the adversaries have at their disposal against suit contracts. I cannot agree with those who class the lead of the fourth best and the eleven rule as a good defence against suit contracts, as the play gives too much information to the strong hand, and information is always of more use to the strong hand than to the weak. Take this case in which a fourth best lead gave the declarer the game

No 86

o 86	♥ Q 7 6 5	
	♣ A 9 2	
	♦ 6 5 3	
	♠ 9 4 3	
♥ K 9	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; text-align: center;">Y A                  B                     Z</div>	♥ J 10 4 3
♣ K 10 7 6 3		♣ 5 4
♦ A J 8 4		♦ Q 10 9 2
♠ 6 2		♠ K 10 8
	♥ A 8 2	
	♣ Q J 8	
	♦ K 7	
	♠ A Q J 7 5	

Z bids a spade and all pass. A leads the fourth best club and dummy goes down. Deducting six from eleven leaves five, and the five higher cards are all in sight. Z sees that he must get two leads from dummy to catch the king of trumps if it is on his right. Dummy's nine of clubs holds the first trick and Z gets his first finesse. The ace of clubs puts dummy in for the second finesse, killing the king and the king of trumps is caught. Now the club jack wins and the heart queen must win when Z leads ace first, game.

When A opened with his lowest club, Z naturally let the lead come up to his queen and jack. Now it is impossible to catch the king of trumps, and the game is saved.

There are so many situations that come up in the middle game in playing against suit contracts that it would be impossible to enumerate them all in a text book but a few hints as to some general principles may be of value

As a rule, if the declarer has been in the lead and has not led trumps there must be some disadvantage in so doing and the adversaries should take the first opportunity to lead trumps themselves especially up to dummy. This frequently kills some scheme to make dummy's trumps separately from the declarer's

Players who understand the theory of suit distribution are always alive to the advantage of leading trumps originally, even right up to the declarer, when they have at least three of each suit and cannot trump anything. This defence has two advantages, it often kills dummy's ability to ruff, and it shows the partner that the leader's suits are undesirable ones to lead away from. This gives him confidence to lead up to dummy's poorly protected suits. There is no necessity for the partner to try to win this original trump lead, unless he has the ace and can get out two rounds at once. The object is not to win trump tricks but to throw the lead. Take this case

No 87

87	♥	A 10 8 6 4											
	♣	10 8 5											
	♦	Q 3											
	♠	10 9 7											
♥	K 9 7 3	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td>Y</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>A</td><td></td><td>B</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Z</td><td></td></tr></table>		Y		A		B		Z		♥	J 5
	Y												
A			B										
	Z												
♣	A J 6 2	♣	Q 7 3										
♦	K J 9	♦	10 8 7 5 4										
♠	8 3	♠	K 6 4										
	♥	Q 2											
	♣	K 9 4											
	♦	A 6 2											
	♠	A Q J 5 2											



Z is playing the hand with spades trumps A to lead. When A started with a small heart, Z killed the jack, returned the suit and finessed the ten. The finesse in trumps followed, catching the king on the third round. Now a small diamond to dummy's queen, and A put on the king. It is very bad play to run the risk of a single guarded queen in dummy winning the trick because if the declarer has the ace your king will be trumped. A then led one of his equals in hearts and dummy held up the ace, Z trumping the trick. The small diamond put dummy in to make the two established hearts, and give Z two club discards. Five odd and the game.

A makes two mistakes. Not being a convert to the system of making aces and kings, he does not even start with the ace of clubs, which saves the game, as B's encouraging seven would induce him to follow with the small club. Now A makes both his kings against any attack.

But the trump opening is the best defence of the three. It kills B's king on the first trick, of course, but when Z led the small diamond to get Y in, A put on the king and led another trump, which dummy won with the nine. Now he must pull B's trump and lose three tricks in clubs and the king of hearts. He may lose two hearts if he tries the finesse of the ten on the second round, after losing his queen. There is no possible way for Z to go game against the trump lead.

There are many cases in which dummy has got ready to ruff some of your good cards, and the only chance is to get out as many of dummy's trumps as possible.

One situation that always demands an original lead of your best trump is when your partner's no-trumper has been overcalled by a suit on your right, and that has

held the contract. The theory of this defence, as I first pointed out in "Foster's Bridge Tactics" and which is now adopted by all progressive players is that if your partner has bid no trumps on strength in three suits it must be his weak suit that is bid against him.

The player who overcalls, on the other hand, has just that one suit and some protection in one or two others. By making sure of throwing him the lead in his suit you force him to lead away from all his protected suits right up to your partner's strength. It is essential, however, always to lead your highest trump, even if it is king and others, to prevent the declarer from throwing you back into the lead.

We have already had some examples of this defence. It is very effective if your partner really has a strong no-trumper, and loses nothing if he has not. You may kill a high trump in your partner's hand, it is true, but you may kill a high card in anything you lead, or make some of the declarer's secondary cards good which is worse. Don't guess at a suit, but lead the suit you know all about.

Never go back to no-trumps or bid a suit if your partner's no-trumper is overcalled, unless you can see game. You will find the penalties picked up against weak and unjustifiable bids on your right are among the most profitable, especially if your partner can double with confidence.

This trump defence is one of the most striking outcomes of the distribution system of bidding and play, but it will probably be some time before writers and teachers see its merits and adopt it. In one of the latest text books, published 1928, entitled "Pencil Bridge," by Geoffrey Mott Smith, we find this defence continually overlooked. Here is an example, Hand No. 19, page 94.

No 88

♡ None  
 ♣ K 10 7 6 5 2  
 ♦ J 9 8 6 5  
 ♠ Q 8

♡ A K 9 4  
 ♣ A J 3  
 ♦ 7 3  
 ♠ A J 6 5

	Y	
A		I
	Z	

♡ Q J 8 7 6  
 ♣ Q 9 8 1  
 ♦ 4 2  
 ♠ K 3

♡ 10 5 3 2  
 ♣ None  
 ♦ A K Q 10  
 ♠ 10 9 7 4 2

The bidding recommended is one diamond by Z, an informative double by A, and five diamonds by Y, which A doubles this time for penalties, which he does not get as the opening lead of the king of hearts establishes an immediate double ruff, Z trumping the first club with the queen to make dummy's fifth trump a re-entry.

The only criticism I have to make of the bidding is that the informative double is absurd when A has two good four-card playing suits. He should have bid the hearts. We shall come to this doubling convention later. A double of five diamonds is absolutely correct.

## DECLARER'S PLAY IN SUITS

The promoting power of the declarer's high cards in trumps is the basis of the double valuation system as we have seen. This valuation seems to be justified by the number of tricks the declarer wins in suit contracts.

In the 75 suit contracts played in the 1927 championships the declarer's side held 341 aces and kings. 116 of them in the trump suit. 225 in plain suits. With this ammunition he won 710 tricks, an average of 9.47 a deal.

There were 28 deals played with spades trumps winning 160 trump tricks. 28 hearts trumps winning 148 tricks in trumps. 10 with diamonds trumps winning 55 trump tricks and 9 with clubs trumps winning 53 tricks. This total of 416 tricks were won with 116 aces and kings as against the 294 tricks the declarer won in plain suits with 225 aces and kings.

As soon as dummy's cards are laid down we find that the declarer has three lines of play open to him in suit contracts and no more. It is quite true that not one first class player in a hundred is aware of this fact because he has never stopped to think about it as a classification of attacks. But if the manner in which an expert handles the various situations is carefully studied it will be found that he always plans his campaign by concentrating upon one or more of three lines of attack. These in the order of their selection are:

- (1) To make dummy's trumps separately from the declarer's.

- (2) To discard losing cards in one plain suit on winning cards in another suit.

- (3) To finesse.

If he cannot do any of these to advantage he will either take in all the tricks in sight with his winning cards, hoping

to make the dreg of some suit worth a trick or two, or he will pick out the suit that is longest between the two hands, lead a small card of it and let the adversaries start something. Nine times out of ten they do so to their own disadvantage.

My advice to the beginner is to ask himself the three foregoing as questions, in their given order, as soon as he sees the dummy. The one that is first answered in the affirmative is the key to the play of the hand at least for a starter. Any of the others may come in later. A few examples may make this point clear.

No 89

♥ 6 4 3 2  
 ♣ None  
 ♦ A K 8 6 5  
 ♠ 8 5 3 2

♥ 10 7  
 ♣ J 9 8  
 ♦ Q 10 7 2  
 ♠ K J 10 9

	Y	
A		B
	7	

♥ 9 8 5  
 ♣ Q 10 7 6 5  
 ♦ J 3  
 ♠ 7 6 4

♥ A K Q J  
 ♣ A K 4 3 2  
 ♦ 9 4  
 ♠ A Q

Z bids one heart, A passes and Y jumps the bid to two hearts to show assisting strength and four trumps. B passes. A led the jack of spades, and the queen won. If Z now asks himself the three questions, he gets an affirmative answer to the first one, Can I make any of dummy's trumps separately? So he leads a small club and dummy trumps it. The return of the spade puts Z in again, and dummy trumps another club.

As there is no way to get Z in again except by trumping something, he may as well trump the suit he knows both

his adversaries have, the spade. This allows dummy to trump the third club and then to lead trumps, hoping not to find four against him in one hand, which might let in a trick or two. As the trumps drop, Z makes his two top clubs, and dummy's two winning diamonds register, grand slam.

At some tables the declarer led three rounds of trumps and then the nine of diamonds, playing for splits, but B renounced on the third round and Z trumped without establishing the suit. Z then led three rounds of clubs, dummy trumping. Now the queen of diamonds makes, A leads a spade and B makes the queen of clubs, holding Z down to five odd, instead of losing a grand slam.

Here is an answer to the second question

No 90.

♥ 10 6  
♣ 10 7 5  
♦ A Q J 9 4  
♠ 7 5 3

♥	Q J 7 2
♣	K Q J 6
♦	7 6 5 3
♠	6

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥	A 8 5 3
♣	9 8 2
♦	10 8 2
♠	A J 4

♥ K 9 4  
♣ A 4 3  
♦ K  
♠ K Q 10 9 8 2

Z started with a bid of two spades, and A led the king of clubs. The answer to the first question; Can I make any of dummy's trump's separately? Is no. The second question is, Can I discard any losing cards? The answer to which is yes, so that is the thing to do, and Z leads the king of diamonds, overtakes it with the ace and leads two winning diamonds, on which he sheds his two losing clubs.

B cannot have another diamond, or he would not give up the ten while dummy had the nine, so the nine will win unless B trumps it ; but B was too good a player to trump, discarding the encouraging eight of hearts instead. Z discarded a heart.

Now that the discarding losers is all over, the third question is : Are there any finesses ? The answer is yes. As we shall see in the chapter on finessing Z hopes the ace is on the right of the king, and leads a small heart. B puts on the ace and A plays the jack, so B returns the heart and Z's king wins.

Now Z must lead the trumps, beginning with the king, and B plays the Bath coup, letting the king win, so as to get his ace and jack led up to, but Z still wins the game. If B had trumped the nine of diamonds, Z would have made five odd, as the seven of trumps becomes a re-entry for the fifth diamond.

Here is the answer to the third question, which shows how carefully the declarer should study situations before yielding to the common desire to lead trumps the moment he gets in when he knows he can catch all those out against him.

No. 91.

b. 91.

♥	K 8 6	♥	Q 10 7 2	
♣	K Q J 8 2	♣	A 9 3	
♦	K 9	♦	8 7 4	
♠	9 8 2	♠	K 5 4	

*Z starts with the higher ranking of two suits one spade* A bids two clubs and Y passes. He has not the four tricks needed for an assist and he cannot trump anything. B passes and Z bids two diamonds. This A passes, waiting to hear from B. Y picks the suit in which he has the better cards and the one that goes game with a trick less bidding two spades. B passes.

A leads the club king and dummy goes down. The answer to the first question is negative, as dummy cannot trump anything. The answer to the second question is also negative, as there is no chance to discard any losers, but the answer to the third question. Are there any finesses? Is yes.

As we shall see when we come to finessing Z must get two finesses in diamonds and make four of that suit to win the game. This requires two leads from dummy, so that is the first thing to attend to before leading trumps as dummy can never get in twice if trumps are led now. Dummy is in with the ace of clubs, for the first finesse jack of diamonds, which loses to A's king. Now A can lead anything he likes, all Z can lose is two hearts.

A's natural continuation is the club jack, the card his partner does now know, as A cannot tell Z has no more clubs. This Z trumps and then, to make sure that his diamonds will not be trumped he leads the ace of trumps. Both adversaries following suit he is certain of winning the third round with the king after making his queen, and getting the second diamond finesse, which wins the game.

At several tables dummy led a small trump winning with the ace and returning a small one. Then so as not to waste two trumps to catch one, dummy led a diamond finessing the ten instead of the jack, which is always bad play, as it shows too much to the adversaries. A won with the king and led the trump to knock two for one. Z



winning. Now Z has to clear the diamonds, B winning and leading heart ace. A playing the encouraging eight, and winning the next trick with the king, saving the game.

One of the great advantages of having some definite method of analyzing the combined hands is that it eliminates from consideration all unessentials. Nothing will improve a person's game so much as practicing this elimination of all worry about suits in which nothing can be accomplished and concentrating on those in which there is something to be done or hoped for. The way some players wander around a hand, trying first one thing and then another, showing the adversaries just where all the weak spots are, is one of the surest marks of a poor player.

It is astonishing how badly some persons can play a hand. Here is a typical case of wandering about without any plan of campaign.

No 92

♥ 10 9 7 3  
 ♣ K 3  
 ♦ Q 5 4 3  
 ♠ 6 4 2

♥ 8 7  
 ♣ Q J 10 7 6 2  
 ♦ 10 9  
 ♠ K 9 7

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A Q 6 5  
 ♣ 4 3  
 ♦ K J 8 7 2  
 ♠ Q 8

♥ K J 2  
 ♣ A 8 5  
 ♦ A 6  
 ♠ A J 10 5 3

Z bids a spade and A leads the queen of clubs. This came up to Z, who won with the ace and led back a club, so that dummy could trump. [To win with the king and lead from that hand, so as to get the ruff on the third round did

not<sup>3</sup> seem to occur to the declarer ] The next lead was the queen of diamonds for an imaginary finesse. The king covered and the ace won. A playing the ten.

Now the third club, trumped by dummy, was overtrumped by B, who led the jack of diamonds, getting A's echo with the nine. The eight of diamonds Z trumped with the trey and A over trumped with the seven, leading the top club. Again dummy trumped and the queen from B forced Z's ace. To avoid the hearts Z led the jack of trumps and A returned the nine. Now Z must lead the hearts, and B forces the last trump with the diamond, setting the contract one trick.

Give this hand to a player who knows tactics and he wins the game. Dummy wins the first club trick, so as to get an immediate finesse in trumps. A leads another club and the ace wins. Not being able to get dummy in for another trump lead Z lays down the ace and nails the queen. Now dummy trumps the losing club, B shedding a diamond. Dummy leads the heart ten, and B puts on the ace, returning a small heart to avoid the diamonds. Z wins with the king, having unblocked with the jack, picks up A's trump, Y and B discarding diamonds, and leads the third heart.

Now it does not matter what B leads. If a heart, Z gets a discard of the losing diamond. If a diamond, both queen and ace win tricks. This gives Z four odd and the game, instead of being set one.

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Now it does not matter what B leads. If a heart, Z gets a discard of the losing diamond. If a diamond, both queen and ace win tricks. This gives Z four odd and the game, instead of being set one.

There are, unfortunately, many situations in which bad play wins and affords the mediocre player a chance to gloat over his success when the scores are compared at the end of a duplicate contest. Here is a deal in which four of the best players in the United States made only four odd and game, while several mediocre players made a little slam.

No 93

♥ Q 9 5 2  
 ♣ J 10 5 3  
 ♦ A Q 10  
 ♠ 10 6

♥ A 6 4  
 ♣ 9 7 6 4 2  
 ♦ K 7 3  
 ♠ 3 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ K J 8 3  
 ♣ A Q  
 ♦ 9 8 6 5  
 ♠ Q 9 4

♥ 10 7  
 ♣ K 8  
 ♦ J 4 2  
 ♠ A K J 8 7 5

Z bid two spades over Y's no-trump take-out, A leads a small club, B playing ace and returning the queen, which Z wins. Z led a small diamond and must finesse, so as to keep the only possible re-entry for the two established clubs. Dummy led the ten of trumps, B playing the four, and Z the five. Another trump lead and Z picks up B's queen, dummy discarding a heart.

Now the jack of diamonds holds the lead and unblocks [Another small diamond would have allowed the ten to win just the same]. The third diamond Y wins, and gives Z two heart discards on the two top clubs, Little slam.

When the experts got this hand they played it in the same way against the same bad opening lead of the small club. [Some players will never learn to make their aces at once against trump contracts]. But after putting dummy in with the diamond finesse and leading the ten of trumps, they did not take that finesse, because game is now certain without it.

Deschappelles says a finesse should never be made unless it gains more than it can lose. If the trump finesse lost

not<sup>7</sup> seem to occur to the declarer ] The next lead was the queen of diamonds, for an imaginary finesse The king covered and the ace won A playing the ten

Now the third club, trumped by dummy, was overtrumped by B, who led the jack of diamonds, getting A's echo with the nine The eight of diamonds Z trumped with the trey and A over trumped with the seven, leading the top club Again dummy trumped and the queen from B forced Z's ace To avoid the hearts Z led the jack of trumps and A returned the nine Now Z must lead the hearts, and B forces the last trump with the diamond, setting the contract one trick

Give this hand to a player who knows tactics and he wins the game Dummy wins the first club trick so as to get an immediate finesse in trumps A leads another club and the ace wins Not being able to get dummy in for another trump lead, Z lays down the ace and nails the queen Now dummy trumps the losing club, B shedding a diamond Dummy leads the heart ten, and B puts on the ace, returning a small heart to avoid the diamonds Z wins with the king, having unblocked with the jack, picks up A's trump, Y and B discarding diamonds, and leads the third heart

Now it does not matter what B leads If a heart, Z gets a discard of the losing diamond If a diamond both queen and ace win tricks This gives Z four odd and the game, instead of being set one

There are, unfortunately, many situations in which bad play wins, and affords the mediocre player a chance to gloat over his success when the scores are compared at the end of a duplicate contest Here is a deal in which four of the best players in the United States made only four odd and game, while several mediocre players made a little slam

No 93

♥ Q 9 5 2  
 ♣ J 10 5 3  
 ♦ A Q 10  
 ♠ 10 6

♥ A 6 4  
 ♣ 9 7 6 4 2  
 ♦ K 7 3  
 ♠ 3 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ K J 8 3  
 ♣ A Q  
 ♦ 9 8 6 5  
 ♠ Q 9 4

♥ 10 7  
 ♣ K 8  
 ♦ J 4 2  
 ♠ A K J 8 7 5

Z bid two spades over Y's no-trump take-out, A leads a small club, B playing ace and returning the queen, which Z wins. Z led a small diamond and must finesse, so as to keep the only possible re-entry for the two established clubs. Dummy led the ten of trumps, B playing the four, and Z the five. Another trump lead and Z picks up B's queen, dummy discarding a heart.

Now the jack of diamonds holds the lead and unblocks [Another small diamond would have allowed the ten to win just the same]. The third diamond Y wins, and gives Z two heart discards on the two top clubs, Little slam.

When the experts got this hand they played it in the same way against the same bad opening lead of the small club. [Some players will never learn to make their aces at once against trump contracts.] But after putting dummy in with the diamond finesse and leading the ten of trumps, they did not take that finesse, because game is now certain without it.

Deschappelles says a finesse should never be made unless it gains more than it can lose. If the trump finesse lost

in this case, the game goes with it, as two hearts make immediately, and a club trick is already lost

Winning two rounds of trumps Z leads another diamond and B has to trump the club to prevent discards but Z gets rid of one heart and goes game

As we shall see when we come to the declarer's play of no trumps, many of the answers to the third question, Are there any finesses, brings in its train another question, that of getting dummy into the lead in order to make the finesses. In many cases it is necessary to get dummy in twice, and that is not always as easy as it looks. Here is an example of careful planning to get tricks enough to win the game.

No. 91

♥	6 5 3
♣	10 3 2
♦	K 9 7 6
♠	9 7 5

♥ 9 8  
♣ K Q 9 8 4  
♦ 8 3  
♠ Q J 3 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ K 10 4  
♣ 7 5  
♦ J 10 5 2  
♠ A K 10 8

♥	A Q J 7 2
♣	A J 6
♦	A Q 4
♠	6 4

Z bids one heart, A and Y passing, B bid a spade, and Z went two hearts, on his outside tricks A assisted the spades on his four tricks, Y passing Z went to three hearts on the second of his outside tricks

A seemed to fear that if he led the spades, they would be trumped immediately, so he led his king of clubs and dummy went down. Z sees that in order to win the game he must make three diamonds and all five of his trumps.

as well as two clubs. If he cannot find the king of trumps on the right of the queen the five trump tricks are impossible, as dummy cannot trump anything, but he must arrange for two leads of trumps from dummy.

One of these is in sight, the king of diamonds. On the chance that A will not shift, and may take B's seven of clubs for an encouraging card, Z drops the jack on the king. A follows with a small club and the ten holds. That is the first trump lead and the finesse of the queen. Now a small diamond and the second trump lead, with the finesse of the jack enables Z to catch the king and win the game.

The spade opening would have set the contract one trick. If B plays the hand at spades, the trump opening holds him down to his contract, two odd.

Separating the trumps may prove useful in two ways; firstly, in trumping losing cards in which the adversaries have the winners, secondly, in trumping the small cards of suit in which you have the winners, so as to establish the suit. This is usually called "ruffing out." It may be the chief plan of the hand, or a part of other plans. Take this example:

No. 95

6 95		♥ A Q 6 4	
		♣ 5 3	
		♦ 9 8 3	
		♠ J 7 6 4	
♥ K J 10 7 5		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"><div style="text-align: center;">Y</div><div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"><div style="text-align: center;">A</div><div style="text-align: center;">B</div></div><div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Z</div></div>	♥ 9 8 3 2
♣ Q 7 4			♣ J 9 8
♦ 10 2			♦ K 7 4
♠ A Q 2			♠ K 10 9
	♥ None		
	♣ A K 10 6 2		
	♦ A Q J 6 5		
	♠ 8 5 3		



Z bid a diamond, A a heart, Y and B passing Z then bid his second suit, two clubs A passed waiting to hear from B, and Y went back to the diamonds as he had more of them Then B went to two hearts, Z to three diamonds, and A quit

As usual, A opened his heart suit, instead of making his ace of spades first This would have brought an echo from B and three spades make at once Now there is no way to catch B's king of trumps, holding Z down to three diamonds

The heart lead gave Y a finesse of the queen, and then the ace gave Z two spade discards That answered the second question of our category, getting rid of losers The next question is the finesse, so dummy leads a trump and the queen holds

Now Z can accomplish a double object, ruffing out a suit to establish it, if he can find it split, and getting dummy into the lead again at the same time, so as to get the second finesse Three rounds of clubs give dummy the ruff, establishing the two long clubs, and the trump finesse enables Z to catch the king Little slam, all because A and B did not make their aces and kings, carrying home three of them

We have already had an example of ruffing out suits as the chief attack in the first hand given in this chapter

Among the minor details scrupulously attended to by all good players is the importance of keeping a trump in each hand high enough to win a trump lead from the other hand In many cases it makes no difference, but every now and then it may prove the key to the whole hand Take this case

No 96

♥ 8 6 5 3  
 ♣ A Q 6  
 ♦ A 7 6 5  
 ♠ 10 9

♥ K 9 4 2  
 ♣ J 8 5  
 ♦ J 10  
 ♠ 7 6 5 4

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A J 10  
 ♣ 10 7  
 ♦ K 9 2  
 ♠ A K Q 8 3

♥ Q 7  
 ♣ K 9 4 3 2  
 ♦ Q 8 4 3  
 ♠ J 2

Z, A and Y pass. B bids a spade, and Z leads a small club. Y wins with the ace and returns the queen and six. With four trumps in the dummy, it is always well for the declarer to trump high enough in his own hand to make one of dummy's a possible winner, after the adversaries' trumps are drawn, so B trumps the club with the eight of spades.

He gets two rounds of trumps and follows with the ace jack of hearts, dummy killing the queen. A third heart is won by B's ten. Now the value of dummy's ability to win a trump trick becomes apparent. B leads the trey of spades, and A wins the trick, making the nine of hearts.

It is now a question of finesse, as B "hopes" the ace of diamonds is to the right of the king, so he leads the jack from dummy. Y ducks, his only chance being that Z has the king. B puts the king right on and wins the game.

The making of re-entries is a continual call upon the declarer's powers of attention and foresight. There is a useful rule to the effect that with four honours between



Overtaking to continue a suit is often very important  
Take this case

No 98

♥ J 8 4  
♣ A Q  
♦ Q 10 6 5 2  
♠ 6 4 2

♥ 10 2  
♣ K J 10 8 2  
♦ 9 8 4  
♠ Q 10 7

	Y	
A		B
	7	

♥ K 9 7 3  
♣ 9 6 4  
♦ A 7 3  
♠ K 9 5

♥ A Q 6 5  
♣ 7 5 3  
♦ K J  
♠ A J 8 3

Z bid no trumps and A led the jack of clubs. Assuming the lead to be from the king and ten, dummy put on the queen. Then he led a small diamond and the king won. When he returned the jack, he took it for granted that B would win it with the ace, and dummy still had the ace of clubs to get in with, so he played a small diamond from dummy.

B held up the ace to see if Z had any more diamonds. This makes it necessary to have two re-entries in dummy, instead of one, as the suit must be cleared and then brought into play. Z tried to do this by leading the queen of hearts, but B would not bite on that bait either, playing the seven.

This led Z into trying for the split, imagining A held the ten three deuce. The ace dropped the ten, but left B with king and nine, and all Z could make was the odd trick with his two aces, clubs and spades. If dummy overtakes the jack of diamonds with the queen, he wins the game with the heart finesse later, and the ace of spades.

## PLAYING AGAINST NO-TRUMPS

The defensive play against no trumps differs from that against suits bid in two particulars. High cards are not led when there are only two honours in the hand and the down and-out echo gives way to the plain suit echo known in whist days as the Foster echo. The lead of the fourth-best may be used if the leader believes his partner understands the eleven rule as well as the declarer understands it.

*The high card leads are from three honours only, unless there are six or seven cards in the suit, and some of these leads vary according to the distribution of high cards in the other suits.* From the following

A Q J x x    A Q 10 x x    K Q 10 x x    \*

If there is no re entry card in another suit, the proper lead from the first of these is the queen to get the king out of the way at once, and leave the partner with one of the suit to return if he gets in. With a re-entry in another suit, the ace is led. From the second the proper lead is the queen, for the same reason and also to remain tenace over the jack after the king has been forced. This is a queen lead regardless of re entry. The ace is the correct opening from any suit of seven cards, as it invites the partner to get out of the way if he has two only by playing his higher card no matter what it is.

From the third combination the king is led so as to

remain tenace over the jack, and also to prevent the first trick being won adversely by a small card

The use of the Forster echo will usually show the leader whether or not to go on, if he wins the first trick, and with what card. The general rule is that with any three honours it is dangerous to lead a small card. Several tricks were lost by players in the championships leading a small card from A Q 10

Holding three honours in sequence, that is always the better suit to open if another suit holds honours not in sequence, but constituting a sure re entry. Take these two hands

♥	Q J 10 x	♥	x
♣	x	♣	A x
♦	x x x	♦	A Q 10 x x
♠	A Q J x x	♠	Q J 10 x x

The wrong opening in the first of these gave the declarer the old trick at no trumps in the 1927 championships when the heart queen opening would have set the contract four tricks. The wrong opening in the second case in the championships gave the declarer five odd and game in hearts, while the correct lead at the other table set the contract

There being no trump suit, the down and-out echo gives way to the following

When no attempt is made to win the partner's lead, play the second best, regardless of number of value, and keep the lowest of three or more until the last

The cases in which you make no attempt to win your partner's lead are those in which he leads a winning card or any card that you do not need to cover or when dummy plays a card second hand that you cannot win.

This echo is particularly useful in showing the leader that the declarer holds a certain number of the suit. We have had an illustration of this when dummy put on the queen second hand and third hand held J 6 2. The play of the six marks the fourth hand as still having a guard to the king for the second round. We also had another example where the play of the lowest card told the leader that the fourth hand had four to the A 10.

Many players use the echo only when they have four cards of the suit. This misses many chances, as there is no difference in the play when the third hand has three, or only two.

Having played second-best, the card that falls on the second trick shows the exact holding. For example, the leads being king and queen.

10 8 6 3          10 8 3          10 3

From the first, the 8 is played and then the 6, showing only one card higher than the 8, and still one lower than the 6. From the second, the 8 is played first, and then the 10, keeping the trey to the last to unblock. From the third the trey is played first, and the fall of the 10 marks the player with no more. If there is an interval between the leads, as when the king, led from K Q J, falls to the ace, and the jack is led later, the leader should be careful to mark the third hand plays.

The warning of third hand's play of the lowest he can possibly hold in the suit often suggests to the leader a shift that gets the one trick necessary to save the game, even if it does no more. Take this case

No 99

♥ 8 7 6  
 ♣ A J 10 6 1 2  
 ♦ 9  
 ♠ 9 7 3

♥ A Q  
 ♣ 8 3  
 ♦ K Q J 8 4 3  
 ♠ 10 8 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 9 5 4 3 2  
 ♣ K 9  
 ♦ 6 2  
 ♠ A J 5 1

♥ K J 10  
 ♣ Q 7 5  
 ♦ A 10 7 5  
 ♠ K Q 6

Z bid no trump and A passed. Y did not take the dealer out as he should have done, with a singleton in hand, and B passed. [On the take-out, Y can make his contract, two clubs, against any defence.]

A led the king of diamonds and B played the two, Z the seven. Now if B does not use the Foster echo, the leader will read him for holding 6 5 2, from the drop and will go right on, to clear the suit. But with the advice from the echo that B has only two, A shifts to the spades as the only chance to put B in the lead.

B wins this with the ace and returns the six of diamonds, so that A can set up the suit, regardless of Z's play. When Z won the trick he led the club queen for the finesse, and B led a heart. A making his remaining diamonds and another heart trick. This set the no-trumper for four tricks.

When the third hand does not echo with less than four, Z makes his contract, as the play of the dummy third hand means nothing to A, who leads another diamond the jack when his king wins. Z wins this with the ace and leads the club. Now B has no diamond left to lead and



A had no warning from him that such would be the case. A gets in with the heart queen, but can make only one more diamond trick.

Still having a re-entry in the hearts he continues the diamond, and Z leads the clubs, winning five tricks in that suit and making his contract, with his two diamond tricks.

*Here is a situation that is constantly misplayed*

No 100

♥ 8 5 4  
 ♣ A 4  
 ♦ 8 6 5 3  
 ♠ Q J 8 4

♥ Q 7  
 ♣ J 7 6 5 3 2  
 ♦ Q J 9  
 ♠ 10 6

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ 10 9 6 3 2  
 ♣ K Q 9  
 ♦ 7  
 ♠ K 7 5 3

♥ A K J  
 ♣ 10 8  
 ♦ A K 10 4 2  
 ♠ A 9 2

Z took a chance on no-trumps, instead of the approaching diamond call. A led a small club, on which dummy put the ace, and B carelessly played the nine. Z played for the split in diamonds and failed to drop the queen, but went on, as the clubs must make in any case. A led another club, B making two tricks. The king of spades is the only hope left, but Z goes game, with two more diamonds, the three hearts and the ace of spades.

If B unblocks, playing his second best when he makes no attempt to win A's club lead, he will be out of the way when A wins the third diamond. As he dropped the queen on the first trick, it is easy for A to read him for the king or no more and to lead a small club. B plays the king

and returns the nine so that A makes four more clubs holding Z down to the odd trick. The approaching diamond bid would have won five odd.

If Z sees his danger which is signalled to him by the eleven rule he must know that B held originally three cards higher than the one led, the five, as Z and dummy have only three of the six missing; he will drop the diamonds and make his contract by three leads of hearts and the ace of spades.

When neither partner has made a bid there are many cases in which they must be careful to wig wag to each other just what can be done with their cards. Here is a case in which a little carelessness lost five by cards.

No 101

♥ 9 3 2  
 ♣ 7 6 5 4  
 ♦ K 7  
 ♠ K J 5 3

♥ K 10 8 7 6  
 ♣ Q 8 2  
 ♦ 9 4  
 ♠ 10 9 2

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A 4  
 ♣ A K 9 3  
 ♦ 10 6 5  
 ♠ 8 7 6 4

♥ Q J 5  
 ♣ J 10  
 ♦ A Q J 8 3 2  
 ♠ A Q

Z took a chance on a no-trump call and A led the seven of hearts which B won with the ace, returning the four. Z played the queen and A won with the king. With his probable re-entry in clubs A went on with the hearts. Z unblocked the spades, put dummy in with a diamond, discarded two losing clubs on dummy's two winning spades and made the rest of the diamonds. Five odd and game.

carding the seven of hearts. It is usually bad policy to blank a suit, as it betrays the partner's hand the first time that suit is led. In this case, the small heart from Z and A's renounce made it easy for Z to win three hearts and the game.

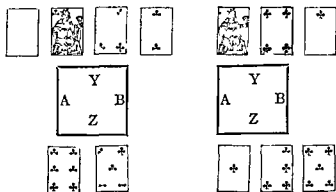
Only one player saw his opportunity in this hand. On winning the diamond trick, an examination of dummy suggested the question why the declarer, with the king of hearts apparently a sure re-entry, did not finesse the clubs, instead of coming back with the diamonds? There is only one possible reason. The declarer did not hold the ace of clubs. Then B has the card, and A led a small club, enabling B to come through Z's spades, setting the no-trumper for two tricks, instead of losing the game.

## DECLARER PLAYING NO-TRUMPS

Of the three lines of attack open to the declarer in suit contracts one is absent in no trumps as there is no question of making dummy's trumps separately. The opportunity to get rid of losing cards gives way to getting rid of blocking cards. The great weapon in the declarer's hand is the finesse.

This is never used by the adversaries in either suit or no-trumps as the only finesse they could make would be against their own partner. Some players will try to win trick's third hand with the queen holding both ace and queen. If the declarer has the king the queen is thrown away. If the leader has the king the ace might as well be played.

There are three kinds of finesses open to the declarer and the principles upon which they are managed should be thoroughly familiar to every player. The first is known as the straight finesse as it either wins or loses at once and that is the end of it. Disregarding everything but the one suit take these two positions



These are both straight ace-queen finessing positions. In the first, the play is to lead a small card from the weaker hand and to hope the king is to the right of the queen. If a small card is played second hand, finesse the queen. It either wins or loses and that ends the matter so far as finessing is concerned.

The second position is precisely the same as the first, as you hope the king is to the right of the queen, and lead a small card from the ace to the queen.

If the king is not to the right of the queen, either of these finesses loses. Beginners seem to imagine that by leading the queen from one hand to the ace in the other, they are making a finesse, the truth being that they are throwing the queen away and giving up all hope of two tricks in the suit. If the king is on the right of the queen, it will win the trick fourth hand. If the king is on the left, it will cover, forcing the ace and all you have accomplished is to make the jack ten nine good against you in that suit.

Double finesses are of two kinds. One may need only one finesse, while the other will always need two. These are the combinations



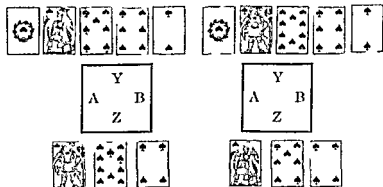
In the first position, if you have not the ten in the weaker hand, lead a small card and finesse the queen, hoping the king is to the right of the queen. If this is the concealed hand, do not finesse the jack, as that betrays your full strength to the enemy. If the finesse loses, that

ends the matter, but if the queen holds it will be necessary to make another lead from the weaker hand, so as to finesse the jack the second time, if the king is not played second hand.

In the second example both king and queen are against the suit. There are four positions possible for those two cards, both on the right of the A J 10, both on the left, king in the left hand, queen in the other, or queen in the left hand king in the other. In only one of these positions can you lose two tricks.

By leading a small card from the weaker hand (if it does not contain the nine), and finessing the jack, conceding the ten, you lose the first finesse to the king or queen. By getting the weaker hand in again, you have the second finesse, hoping the other high card is on your right. If the finesse of the ten holds, lead the ace to drop the high card. We have had several examples of this ace-jack-ten finesse, the opportunities for which are continually overlooked by average players.

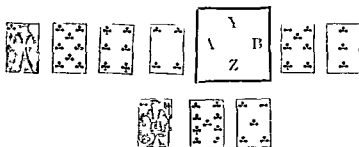
The finessing of the intermediate cards is very simple, but it is the getting the two leads from the weaker hand that is usually the problem. If the combination is divided, such as in these positions:



Two finesses are not necessary, if we follow the rule, "High cards from the hand that is shorter in the suit," as the lead of the high card from the short hand either holds, or clears the suit at once. The matter to attend to in these positions is to keep the lead in the weaker hand until the finesse wins.

Good players never lead a jack to an ace queen suit, without the ten, unless they are very long in the suit, as that risks being compelled to play two honours to win one trick. Lead the small card and try the straight finesse if you have not all four honours.

Keeping the lead in the weaker hand is very important, and is sometimes carelessly managed. Take this position



If the jack is led the king holds off, as that player knows the jack would not be led without the four honours between the two hands. Now dummy must win the second round and the king is safe. The correct play is to lead the nine and duck it. Then the jack and duck that. Now both queen and ace are good.

Here is a simple example of finessing tactics at no-trumps, showing the play for game when contract is safe.

No. 103.

♥ 4 2  
 ♣ 10 9 5  
 ♦ J 10 6  
 ♠ K 10 9 6 4

♥ 8 7  
 ♣ Q 7 6 2  
 ♦ A Q 9 3  
 ♠ 8 7 3

	Y	
A		B
	Z	

♥ A 10 9 6  
 ♣ A 8 4  
 ♦ 7 5 2  
 ♠ A Q J

♥ K Q J 6 5  
 ♣ K J 3  
 ♦ K 8 4  
 ♠ 6 2

Z bids one heart, A passing. Y denies the hearts with one spade. B, having both the playing suits stopped twice, bids one no-trump.

As his partner's spade take-out may be weak, and Z has ample re-entries, he leads the king of hearts, showing three honours. Y plays the deuce, showing only one more, and for fear of a shift B wins the trick.

On looking over his resources, B sees that to win the game all three of his finessing positions must stand up under him. That is, he must make two diamonds, two clubs, three spades and another heart, or a trick in a split suit. So he begins by playing the suit shown on the table, as it is always a good rule when either of two suits may be played for, to conceal the one in the declarer's hand as long as possible. The diamond finesse wins.

To try the club finesse he must get himself, so as to lead from the ace to the jack. Now B gets the lead of

and again  
 Dummy  
 Y



Z puts on the king he may make the ten of hearts good, or he may lead a diamond, which drives B to play for the split in clubs, making three tricks in that suit and two more spades, game. If Z does not play the club king second hand, B plays for the split just the same, setting up a sure club trick before losing the ace of diamonds.

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# The Laws of Auction Bridge

as revised and adopted  
by the Portland Club  
after consultation with  
: other London Clubs :

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## INTRODUCTION

EARLY in the year 1927 the Portland Club took steps to revise the Laws of Auction Bridge with the intention, *inter alia*, of incorporating therein "Decisions" on questions raised since the last issue in 1924

The question of adopting Majority Calling in place of Value Calling having become an issue, the Portland Club decided to take the opinion of the leading London and provincial clubs on this and certain other matters. At the same time the Portland Club invited eleven of the leading card playing clubs of London to confer with them in considering the replies from the London and provincial clubs, and in revising the Laws

The conference consisted of representatives of the following clubs—Almack's, Baldwin, Bath, Carlton, Conservative, Devonshire, National Liberal, St James's, St Stephen's, Turf, White's, and Portland

At the first meeting of the Conference it was decided to adopt Majority Calling, but in response to representations it was decided at a second meeting to request all clubs to give Majority Calling a four months' trial, and at the end of that period a second vote of the London and provincial clubs was taken

A third meeting of the Conference was then held, and, the results of the voting having been made known it was resolved by a unanimous vote "to retain Value Calling in the Revised Laws of Auction Bridge" the Conference finding "that there is not a general desire to adopt Majority Calling in place of Value Calling"

It was decided, however, that for the convenience of players who may desire to play Majority Calling an alternative Law be included in the book of Laws of Auction Bridge, as an appendix

The Conference further desired that the Portland Club should issue as soon as possible the Revised Laws of Auction Bridge

The Card Committee of the Portland Club desire to acknowledge the valuable help which they have received in the drafting of the Laws as revised by them and now issued.

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# THE LAWS OF AUCTION BRIDGE

## I. PRELIMINARY.

### FORMATION OF TABLES AND JOINING TABLES.

1 (1) A table for Auction Bridge consists of four, five or six members. A table with six members is complete.

(2) Any candidate may at any time join a table which is not complete by announcing or signifying his desire to do so.

(3) A member of a table may join another table, but he cannot be a member of more than one table at the same time.

### PRECEDENCE.

2 In the formation of a table, candidates who have not yet played have precedence over those who have played in regard to membership and also in regard to title to play in the first rubber. As between candidates who have not played or as between candidates who have played, precedence is determined by drawing cards.

### PLAYER BREAKING UP A TABLE.

3 If a player retires from a table thereby leaving it with less than four members, he is not entitled to compete against any of the remaining players for entry into any other table.

### SELECTION OF PLAYERS AND PARTNERS FOR FIRST RUBBER.

4 If all the four players for the first rubber at a table have to be selected by drawing cards that drawing serves for all purposes in the following manner.—The four who have drawn lower cards than the others play in the first

rubber the two with lower cards playing as partners against the other two, the one with the lowest card being the dealer of the first hand

In any other case the four who are to play in the first rubber draw in like manner for partners and deal

### **SELECTION OF PLAYERS AND PARTNERS FOR SUCCEEDING RUBBER.**

5 At the end of each rubber table up must be announced Place must then be made at the table for any member who is waiting to play and if the table is not complete for any candidate who before a card has been drawn for selection of players or partners announces his desire to join the table

In the selection of the two or more members who are to continue playing precedence is given to any who have played a less number of consecutive rubbers and as amongst those with equal claims is determined by drawing cards

The four members entitled to play then draw for partners and deal

### **CHOICE OF PACKS AND SEATS**

6 The dealer of the first hand of a rubber has the right to choose his seat and the pack with which he will deal He may consult his partner but having announced his decision must abide by it

### **DRAWING CARDS**

7 (1) When cards have to be drawn to determine precedence or partners a shuffled pack is spread face downwards on the table Each draws a card from the pack When all have so drawn the cards are exposed If anyone exposes more than one card or exposes his card before all have drawn there must be a fresh draw

(2) Precedence is conceded in each case to the drawer of the lower card

(3) In drawing, but for no other purpose, the Ace ranks as the lowest card of its suit, and cards of equal value rank as between themselves Spades (highest) Hearts, Diamonds Clubs (lowest)

## II. THE RUBBER.

### The Shuffle, Cut and Deal.

#### SHUFFLING.

8 (1) Before every deal each player has the right to shuffle once The Dealer has the right to shuffle last Should the face of a card be seen while the dealer is shuffling or presenting the pack to be cut, he can be called upon to re shuffle

(2) The pack must not be shuffled—

(a) so that the face of any card can be seen ,

(b) below the table , or

(c) during the play of a hand

(3) During each deal the dealer's partner should collect the other cards, shuffle them and place them, as a pack, face downwards on his right, i.e., on the left of the player who will deal next

#### CUTTING.

9 (1) The dealer presents the pack to the player on his right who lifts off a portion from the top and places it towards the dealer beside the bottom portion The dealer then completes the cut by placing the bottom portion on the top portion

(2) There must be a new shuffle and cut—

(a) if the cut has left fewer than four cards in either portion ,



- (b) if a card is exposed in cutting or in completing the cut ;
- (c) if the player who cuts completes the cut ;
- (d) if there is doubt as to the exact place in which the pack was divided, or as to which was the top portion ; or
- (e) if the dealer shuffles the cards after the pack has been cut.

### DEALING.

10. (1) Each player deals in turn. The order of dealing goes to the left. \*

(2) The dealer must deal the fifty-two cards into four packets, face downwards, one at a time in regular rotation to the left, the first card being dealt to the player on his left.

(3) Any player dealing out of turn, or with the opponent's pack, may be stopped before the last card is dealt ; otherwise the deal stands good as if made in turn, and the packs, if changed, remain changed.

(4) No player may look at any of his cards until the deal is completed.

### A NEW DEAL.

11. (1) There must be a new deal by the same player with the same pack—

- (a) if the dealer omits to have the pack cut and any player draws attention to the error before the last card is dealt and before he looks at any of his cards ;
- (b) if during a deal any card is found to be faced in the pack ;
- (c) if during a deal a card is in any way exposed on, above or under the table. This is subject to the law relating to looking at cards during a deal (Law 32) ;

- (d) if the cards are not dealt into four packets, one at a time in regular rotation, beginning with the player on the dealer's left, provided that, if the dealer deals two cards at once or consecutively to the same hand, he may rectify the error before dealing another card,
- (e) if the last card does not come in its regular order to the dealer,
- (f) if a player picks up another player's hand and looks at it, and the error is discovered before a call is made,
- (g) if before play begins or at any time during the hand, a player holds more than the proper number of cards and another less,

and in any other case where a new deal is required or claimed under these laws (see Law 34, call out of turn, Law 36, illegal call, Law 37, card exposed during auction, Law 42, omission to play to trick, and Law 43, missing card)

(2) If during a deal, or during the play of a hand the pack is proved to be incorrect as regards the number or the value of the cards which it contains the hand is void, and there must be a new deal by the same player with a correct pack, but past scores stand good

### **The Auction.**

#### **THE AUCTION AND ITS DURATION.**

12 (1) When the deal is completed, the dealer must open the auction by making a call; and, thereafter, each player in succession to the left must make a call the auction continuing until a call made by one player has been passed by the other three players at which point the auction is closed

(2) A call may be either a pass, a bid, a double or a redouble

**PASSING.**

13 (1) A player who does not desire to make any other call passes and to avoid misunderstanding this is best expressed by the words No Bid

(2) If in the first round of the auction all four players pass, the hand is abandoned and the player whose turn it is to deal next must deal using the other pack

**BIDDING AND OVERBIDDING.**

14 (1) A player who makes a bid offers to contract that if the hand is played with the suit named in his bid as Trumps or, should his bid so specify with No Trumps he and his partner will win at least as many odd tricks as the bid specifies "Odd Tricks" are tricks in excess of six

(2) Each successive bid must be either of higher value than the last preceding bid or of equal value and of a greater number of tricks

(3) The value of a bid is determined by giving to each odd trick named in the bid the value (unaffected by doubling or redoubling) attaching to it under the law relating to the scoring of tricks (i.e. Clubs 6 Diamonds 7 Hearts 8 Spades 9 and No Trumps 10—see Law 24)

**DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING.**

15 (1) Any player may in his turn double the last preceding bid if made by an opponent or redouble it if it has been doubled by an opponent Doubling and redoubling affect scoring values in the manner set out in these laws (Laws 24 26) but do not affect the number of tricks in the bid nor its value for the purpose of the auction

(2) A bid which has been redoubled may not again be doubled

(3) When a bid has been doubled or redoubled any player including the player whose bid has been doubled or who doubled the bid which has since been redoubled may in his turn make a further bid

(4) If in doubling or redoubling a player mentions an incorrect number of tricks he is deemed to have doubled or redoubled the bid as made

### **CORRECTING A MISNOMER.**

16 If a bid is shown to be a misnomer by the bidder amending it practically in the same breath it stands as amended By a misnomer is meant a slip of the tongue and not a change of mind Except in a case provided for by this law or by Law 35 (2) (insufficient bids) a player may not alter a call made by him

### **THE FINAL BID AND THE DECLARER**

17 The player who has made the final bid in the auction and his partner become the declaring side that one of them who first bid the suit named in the final bid or who first bid No Trumps in a case where the final bid specifies No Trumps becomes the Declarer and the final bid becomes the Declaration

### **INFORMATION AS TO CALLS MADE.**

18 At any time before the auction is closed a player is entitled to have all previous calls repeated After it is closed he is only entitled to ask what is the declaration and whether (but not by whom) it was doubled or redoubled

### **The Play.**

#### **LEADING, PLAYING TRICKS**

19 (1) When the auction is closed the player on the left of the Declarer leads a card and as soon as a card has so been led the Declarer's partner spreads his cards face

upwards in front of him on the table and the Declarer becomes the player of his partner's hand as well as of his own

(2) After a lead a card is played from each hand in succession to the left and the four cards thus played constitute a trick

(3) If a suit was named in the final bid of the auction each card of that suit ranks as a trump

(4) A trick containing a trump or trumps is won by the player of the highest trump. A trick containing no trump is won by the player of the highest card of the suit led

(5) The winner of each trick leads to the next trick. If he is the Declarer he must lead from the hand from which the winning card in the preceding trick was played

(6) The leader may lead any card in his hand. The players of the other three hands must follow suit if they can but a player having no card of the suit led may play any card in his hand

(7) A card drawn by the Declarer from either hand is not played until it is actually quitted

(8) A card once played or named by a player as the card which he proposes to play cannot be taken back except as directed or permitted in these laws (see Laws 38 and 39 lead out of turn Law 43 missing card and Law 52 correcting a revoke)

(9) Each completed trick must be gathered and turned face downwards on the table by the side winning it and is deemed to be quitted when the player's hand is removed from it. All tricks gathered by a side should be kept together and so arranged that the number thereof may be observed and the identity of each trick readily established

(10) After a trick has been turned and quitted the cards in it may be counted face downwards, but it may not be inspected before the end of the hand unless there is doubt as to which side won it, or unless it is found to contain an incorrect number of cards

(11) Any player during the play of a trick, or after the four cards are played, and before, but not after, they are touched for the purpose of gathering them, may require the players to specify which cards they have played

### DUMMY'S RIGHTS.

20 The Declarer's partner before placing his cards on the table has all the rights of a player and may call attention to the fact that the wrong opponent has led to the first trick, but after exposing his hand he becomes "Dummy" and may take no part whatever in the game except that he may—

(a) ask the Declarer whether any play by him constitutes a revoke,

(b) call attention to the fact that too many or too few cards have been played to a trick, or that the Declarer has played two cards to a trick from one hand and none from the other,

(c) see a trick before it is turned and quitted;

(d) call attention to the fact that a trick has been wrongly gathered by either side,

(e) correct the claim of either opponent to a penalty to which he is not entitled,

(f) correct an erroneous score, or mis statement of fact,

(g) participate in the discussion of any question of fact or law;

(h) consult with his partner as to the choice of penalty for an established revoke

**CURTAILING PLAY.**

21 (1) An opponent of the Declarer may at any time show any of his remaining cards to the Declarer for the purpose of claiming one or more of the remaining tricks, and such cards are not liable to be called unless they are so exposed that his partner might see them

(2) If the Declarer indicates that some or all of the remaining tricks are his, he may be required to comply with the provisions of Law 51

(3) If a claim, or a concession of tricks has been accepted and all the players have in consequence exposed their cards, no player can claim that they play of the hand shall be continued. If it is found that either side has conceded a trick or tricks which the opponents could not win by any play of the cards, the latter cannot claim such trick or tricks, but, subject to this, the score must stand as claimed and admitted

(4) In any case where a hand is not played out, the unplayed cards may be examined for the purpose of establishing a revoke

**The Score.****POINTS TO BE SCORED**

22 (1) *Points are scored in respect of Tricks, Bonus, Undertricks, Honours, Slam, Penalties and Rubber*

(2) Separate account is kept of points scored in respect of tricks. For this purpose a line is drawn across the scoring sheet. Trick points are scored below the line and all other points above the line

**POINTS WHICH WIN GAME.**

23 (1) A game is won by the partners who, in one or more hands first score thirty points for tricks won

(2) The hand in which a side wins a game is played out and all points won therein are scored, but no trick points

in excess of thirty scored by the winning side and no trick points already scored by the other side assist towards winning the next game

For the purposes of this law, tricks taken for the revoke penalty rank as tricks won

### TRICK POINTS

24 If the Declarer by winning the declared number of odd tricks, or more, makes good the declaration, he scores in respect of each odd trick won by him

6 points when Clubs	are Trumps
7 " " Diamonds	" "
8 " " Hearts	" "
9 " " Spades	" "
10 " " there are No Trumps	

In scoring, these values are doubled when the bid has been doubled, and are quadrupled when the bid has been redoubled

For the purposes of this law, tricks taken for the revoke penalty rank as tricks won

### BONUS POINTS

25 If the Declarer by winning the declared number of odd tricks or more, makes good the declaration in a case where the final bid has been doubled, he scores a bonus of fifty points for winning the number of tricks declared, and fifty points for each additional trick. If the final bid has been redoubled this bonus is increased to one hundred points

For the purposes of this law, tricks taken for the revoke penalty do not rank as tricks won

### UNDERTRICK POINTS

26 If the Declarer fails to make good the declaration, he scores nothing for tricks, and his opponents unless a revoke has been established against them, score in respect



of each undertrick fifty points or, if the final bid was doubled or redoubled one hundred or two hundred points respectively.

An undertrick is a trick which the declaring side has contracted to win but has not won.

### HONOUR POINTS.

27 (1) The honours in a trump suit are the Ace, King, Queen, Knave and Ten of the Trump Suit. When there are no trumps they are the four Aces.

(2) A player and his partner score for honours held by them as follows —

(a) In a trump suit—

for five honours in one hand	ten times the trick value of the suit
for four honours in one hand and one in the other	nine times ditto
for four honours in one hand and none in the other	eight times ditto
for five honours neither hand containing more than three	five times ditto
for four honours not all in one hand	four times ditto
for three honours	twice ditto

(b) If there are no trumps—

for four Aces in one hand	100 points
for four Aces not all in one hand	40 „
for three Aces	30 „

(3) Points for honours are not affected by doubling or redoubling.

**SLAM POINTS.**

28. If either side wins—

(a) All thirteen tricks, that side scores for Grand Slam 100 points ;

(b) Twelve tricks, that side scores for Little Slam 50 points.

The declaring side, having contracted to make seven odd tricks and failed, cannot score a Little Slam.

For the purposes of this law, tricks taken for the revoke penalty do not rank as tricks won.

**RUBBER POINTS.**

29. The rubber is won by the side which first wins two games, and the winners of the rubber add 250 points to their score.

**COMPLETION OF SCORE.**

30. At the end of the rubber the total score of each side above and below the line is added up, and the difference between the two totals is the number of points won and lost.

**CORRECTION OF SCORE.**

31. (1) A mistake in the trick score may be corrected at any time before the completion of the first deal of the next game after that in which the error was made, or, if the error was made in the last game of a rubber, before the score of the rubber has been made up and agreed.

(2) A trick gathered by the side which did not win it may be claimed by the rightful owners at any time before the tricks have been put together for shuffling. If the claim is made before all have played to the succeeding trick Laws 38 and 39 (leads out of turn) do not apply : the cards led and played to that trick are taken back and cannot be treated as exposed cards, and a lead is made from the

correct hand. If the claim is not made until all have played to the succeeding trick that trick and subsequent tricks shall stand as played.

(3) Any other error in the score may be corrected at any time before the score of the rubber has been made up and agreed.

### III INFRINGEMENT OF LAWS AND PENALTIES

#### LOOKING AT CARDS DURING DEAL

32 If a player looks at any of his cards during the deal and a card is exposed before the deal is completed the player on his left may after looking at the cards already dealt to him elect that notwithstanding the exposure of such card (Law 11 (1) (c) ) there shall not be a new deal.

#### PASSING OUT OF TURN

33 (1) If a player passes out of turn and attention is drawn to the irregularity before the player on the offender's left has called the player whose turn it was to call must do so and the offender when next it is his turn to call must pass but is not debarred from subsequent participation in the auction.

(2) If attention is not drawn to the irregularity before the player on the offender's left has called the out of turn pass and the subsequent call both rank as calls made in correct turn and the auction proceeds accordingly.

#### BIDDING, DOUBLING OR REDOUBLING OUT OF TURN

34 (1) If a player makes out of turn a call other than a pass and attention is drawn to the irregularity before the player on the offender's left has called that player may demand a new deal.

(2) If attention is not drawn to the irregularity before the player on the offender's left has called or if that player

elects not to demand a new deal, the out-of-turn call and the subsequent call both rank as calls made in correct turn and the auction proceeds accordingly.

### INSUFFICIENT BID.

35. (1) If a player bids a number of tricks insufficient to overbid the preceding bid and fails to correct his bid before attention is drawn to the irregularity, the player on his left may either—

(a) Allow the bid to stand. In this case the insufficient bid ranks as a sufficient bid ; or

(b) Elect to treat the number of tricks specified in the bid as raised either to the number requisite to overbid the preceding bid, or to seven, whichever is the lower. In this case the offender's partner may make no call other than a pass unless an opponent overbids or doubles ; or

(c) Declare the auction closed. In this case the last bid preceding the insufficient bid becomes the Declaration, any double or redouble of it remaining effective.

(2) Until attention has been drawn to the irregularity or a call has been made by the player on his left, the offender may correct his bid by raising the number of tricks specified to the requisite number. If he does so, the bid stands as corrected and there is no penalty.

(3) If the player on the offender's left makes a call before attention has been drawn to the irregularity, he is deemed to have elected to allow the bid to stand.

### ILLEGAL CALLS.

36. If a player—

(a) bids an impossible number of tricks ;

(b) bids when debarred by these laws from bidding ;

(c) doubles his partner's bid ,

(d) doubles or redoubles a bid which his partner has doubled or redoubled ,

(e) names a wrong suit when doubling or redoubling

(f) alters his call when not entitled by these laws to do so (see Laws 16 and 35) ,

(g) *being an opponent of the Declarer, makes a call other than a pass after the auction is closed , or*

(h) makes any other call not authorized by these laws ,  
the player on the offender's left may either demand a new deal, or treat such call as *not made*, or allow it to stand , provided that if he elects that a bid of an impossible number of tricks shall stand, such bid shall be treated as a bid of seven odd tricks only

### CARD EXPOSED DURING AUCTION

37 If, after the deal has been completed but before the auction is closed, any player exposes a card from his hand, the player on his left, after looking at his cards may demand a new deal If the deal is allowed to stand, the card may be taken up and cannot be treated as an exposed card , and the auction proceeds as if nothing irregular had occurred

### LEAD OUT OF TURN BY DECLARER.

38 If the Declarer leads when it is not his turn to lead or leads a card from the wrong hand he may not voluntarily withdraw the card led , but, if either opponent draws attention to the irregularity before a fourth card has been played to the trick, a lead must be made from the correct hand and the cards played to the trick are taken back and cannot be treated as exposed cards      \*

**LEAD OUT OF TURN BY OPPONENT.**

39. (1) If an opponent of the Declarer leads when it is his partner's turn to lead, the Declarer, before he has played to the trick from either hand, may require the partner to lead, and may either—

(a) call a suit to be led by him ; or

(b) treat the card led out of turn as an exposed card.

(2) If an opponent of the Declarer leads when it is the Declarer's turn to lead, the Declarer, before he has played to the trick from either hand, may lead from the correct hand, and the card led out of turn is an exposed card ; but when next it is an opponent's turn to lead, the Declarer, if he has not in the interval called the exposed card, may call a suit to be led by that opponent ; and, should he do so, the card (unless previously played by the owner) may be taken up and ceases to be an exposed card.

(3) If an opponent of the Declarer leads out of turn simultaneously with a lead by the player whose turn it is to lead, the card led out of turn is an exposed card, and there is no other penalty.

**PREMATURE LEAD OR PLAY BY OPPONENT.**

40. If an opponent of the Declarer plays to a trick before his partner when in proper turn his partner should play before him, or, if, before his partner has played to the current trick, he leads to the succeeding trick or displays to his partner any card or cards in his hand, the Declarer may require the offender's partner—

(a) to win the trick, by trumping if necessary ;

(b) not to win the trick ; or

(c) to discard a card of a named suit ;

but no such requirements can override the player's duty to follow suit.

### PREMATURE PLAY BY DECLARER.

41 If the Declarer, after leading a card from either hand plays a card from the other hand out of turn he can claim no penalty from an opponent for playing out of turn.

### OMISSION TO PLAY TO A TRICK.

42 (1) If an opponent of the Declarer omits to play to a trick and attention is not drawn to the irregularity before the offender has played to the next trick the Declarer may on discovering the irregularity claim a new deal.

(2) If the Declarer omits to play to a trick from his own hand and attention is not drawn to the irregularity before he has played to the next trick, either opponent may, on discovering the irregularity, but without consulting his partner, claim a new deal.

(3) If in either of the above cases a new deal is not claimed, or if the Declarer has omitted to play from Dummy's hand, the offending player shall at once add to the defective trick a card which he could properly play to it but the ownership of the trick shall not be affected thereby.

### PLAYING WITH INCOMPLETE HAND

43 (1) If after the completion of a deal a player finds that he has less than the proper number of cards and no other player has more than the proper number, the missing card or cards must if possible be found, and—

(a) In the event of failure to find a missing card, or of its position when found being such as to show that it was not duly dealt to the player, there shall be a new deal,

(b) In any other event (including the case where a missing card is found in a quitted trick) the card

shall be restored to the player and for the purposes of these laws is deemed to have been in his hand continuously and cannot be treated as an exposed card

(2) If a quitted trick contains more than four cards and there is any doubt as to which card was included therein in error, the decision rests with the opponents of the player whose hand is deficient

### CARD EXPOSED DURING PLAY.

44 (1) If after the auction is closed an opponent of the Declarer exposes a card from his hand otherwise than in the proper course of play, such card must be left on the table as "an exposed card" and the Declarer, whenever it is the turn of the owner of the card to lead or to play, may call that card, i.e., require him to lead or play that card, even though it may not have been left on the table

(2) The Declarer cannot forbid the lead or play of an exposed card

(3) A call to play an exposed card does not override the player's duty to follow suit but the card remains an exposed card until played and may be called to any later trick

(4) For the purpose of this law and subject to any provision to the contrary in these laws (see Law 21, curtailing play, Law 31 (2) trick wrongly gathered, Laws 38 and 39, leading out of turn, Law 43, playing with incomplete hand, Law 51, play after tricks claimed, and Law 52 correcting revoke) the following are exposed cards —

- (a) A surplus card led or played to the current trick  
In this case the player is entitled to say which card he intended to lead or to play,



- (b) A card dropped with its face upwards, or in any way exposed on or above the table even though no one can name it. But a card dropped below the table is not an exposed card,
- (c) A card named or indicated by an opponent of the Declarer as being in his hand,
- (d) A card detached from the hand of a player and so held that the Declarer can name it correctly. This is subject to the law relating to curtailing play (see Law 21 (1) ),
- (e) A card which under any other provision in these laws ranks as an exposed card (see Laws 38 and 39, leading out of turn, Law 52, correcting revoke, and Law 54, playing before opponent has given his decision)

(5) No penalty is incurred by the Declarer or his partner for exposing cards after the auction has closed

#### **DUMMY SUGGESTING CARD TO BE PLAYED.**

45 If Dummy, by touching a card or otherwise, suggests the play of a card, either opponent may, without consulting his partner, call upon the Declarer to play or not to play the card suggested, unless such play would constitute a revoke

#### **DUMMY DRAWING ATTENTION TO A WRONG LEAD**

46 If Dummy draws the attention of the Declarer to the fact that he has led, or is about to lead, from the wrong hand, the opponent on the left of the Declarer may name the hand from which the lead is to be made

#### **DUMMY DRAWING ATTENTION TO IRREGULARITY**

47 If Dummy draws attention to any irregularity to which he is not authorized by these laws to draw attention (see Law 20), the Declarer can exact no penalty in respect of that irregularity

**DUMMY LOOKING AT CARDS IN OTHER HANDS**

48 (1) If Dummy looks over any other hand, he loses the right to ask the Declarer if his play constitutes a revoke.

(2) If Dummy asks such question after looking over any other hand and the Declarer could follow suit or play as required, the revoke is thereupon established

**DRAWING PARTNER'S ATTENTION TO POSITION OF TRICK.**

49 If an opponent of the Declarer before his partner has played to a trick and without being requested to do so, draws his partner's attention to the trick by saying it is his, by naming his card or drawing it towards him, or in any other way, the Declarer may require the offender's partner—

(a) to play the highest or the lowest card which he holds in the suit led ;

(b) to win the trick, by trumping if necessary , or

(c) not to win the trick ,

but no such requirement can override the player's duty to follow suit

**LOOKING AT QUITTED TRICK.**

50 If a player (including Dummy) during the play of a hand looks at a trick which has been properly turned and quitted, when not authorized by these laws to do so (Law 19 (10) ), his opponents may score fifty points for each offence

**DECLARER CLAIMING UNCERTAIN TRICKS.**

51 If during the play of a hand the Declarer indicates that some or all of the remaining tricks are his, he must place his cards face upwards, on the table and state how he proposes to play the rest of the hand, including any finesse, and he may be required by either opponent to

play in the manner stated. He cannot call any cards which may have been exposed in consequence of his action, nor can his cards be called by an opponent, nor can he revoke during the play of the exposed hand.

### THE REVOKE CORRECTED

52 (1) If a player—

(a) plays a card of a different suit when he could play a card of the suit led, or

(b) leads or plays otherwise than as required when he could lead or play as he has been duly required to do,

he revokes, and, in determining whether a player has revoked, a card temporarily missing from his hand and subsequently restored to it under these laws is deemed to have been in his hand while it was missing.

(2) A revoke becomes established when either—

(a) the trick has been properly turned and quitted, or

(b) the offender or his partner in right turn or otherwise has led or played to the next trick, or

(c) the offender has exposed his remaining cards.

(3) If the offender discovers his error before the revoke is established, he must lead or play a correct card, and

(i) if he is an opponent of the Declarer, the latter may either treat the card wrongly played as an exposed card or claim that the card to be led or played shall be the highest or the lowest card which the offender holds in the correct suit,

(ii) if he is the Declarer, and the wrong card has been played from his own hand the player on his left, if he has played to the trick after the Declarer, may

claim that the card to be played shall be the highest or the lowest card which the Declarer holds in the correct suit

(4) If the wrong card has been played from Dummy's hand there is no penalty, whether the revoke is corrected or becomes established

(5) A player (including Dummy) may ask his partner whether any lead or play by him constitutes a revoke, and if such inquiry has been begun before the trick has been properly turned and quitted, subsequent turning and quitting does not establish the revoke and the error may be corrected unless the inquiry made has been answered in the negative, or unless the offender or his partner has led or played to the next trick or exposed his remaining cards. This is subject to the provisions of Law 48

(6) Any card played to the trick after the revoke may, when the revoke has been corrected, be taken back without penalty and cannot be treated as an exposed card

### THE REVOKE ESTABLISHED

53 (1) If a player fails to correct a revoke whilst it is open to him to do so the trick stands as played and—

(a) the offender and his partner cannot score any points won in the hand other than points for honours and infringements of these laws, and

(b) one hundred points are added to their opponents' score,

provided that in the case of the first revoke in a suit the Declarer, if he has not in that hand himself been penalized under this law, may, after consultation with his partner elect to take two of his opponents' tricks and add them to his own in lieu of the one hundred points

Tricks so taken rank for the purposes of scoring in the manner directed in the laws relating to scoring

(2) Either opponent of the Declarer may claim the penalty for a revoke

(3) If the Declarer has inquired as to the correctness of any lead or play or suggested that he has observed a revoke Dummy may join in any discussion in regard to the facts

(4) If a revoke has been claimed with or without reference to a particular suit the tricks may be inspected at the end of the hand for the purpose of establishing it and if the accused player or his partner after such claim has been made mixes the cards before they have been fully inspected the revoke is established

(5) A revoke cannot be claimed after the cards have been properly cut for the following deal

#### **PLAYING BEFORE DECISION ON CALL PENALTY GIVEN**

54 If a player leads or plays without ascertaining the decision of an opponent who is entitled to require him to lead or play in a particular way, the opponent's right is not affected thereby and the card led or played can be treated as an exposed card

#### **CLAIMING LEAD OF SUIT NOT HELD**

55 If a player entitled to call the suit from which an offender or his partner is to lead or discard calls a suit but the hand from which the lead or discard is called contains no card of that suit, the penalty lapses

#### **MIS-STATEMENT OF LAW OR FACT.**

56 If a player when requested by his partner or an opponent to state the law applying to a case in point or to state the facts in relation to any matter about which information may properly be given misstates the law or

the facts and such mis-statement remains uncorrected, no penalty can be imposed for any irregularity attributable to such mis-statement.

#### **CLAIMING UNAUTHORIZED PENALTY.**

57. If a player entitled to claim a penalty for an irregularity claims one to which he is not entitled, the right to exact any penalty for that irregularity lapses.

#### **WRONG PLAYER CLAIMING PENALTY.**

58. If the partner of the player solely entitled to claim a penalty for an irregularity suggests which of alternative penalties is to be claimed, the right to exact any penalty for that irregularity lapses.

#### **RIGHT TO DRAW ATTENTION TO IRREGULARITY.**

59. Subject to the provisions of the law relating to Dummy's rights (Law 20), any player may call his partner's attention to the fact that an irregularity has been committed and may state the law on the subject.

### **IV. MISCELLANEOUS.**

#### **AGREED TIME LIMITS.**

60. If a rubber has been started under an agreement that play shall end at a specified time, or if the players agree during a rubber that any particular hand shall be the last, the score is made up at the end of the hand in progress at the time agreed upon, or at the end of the particular hand agreed upon, one hundred and twenty-five points being added to the score of a side by which a game has been won.

#### **PLAYER OBLIGED TO RETIRE.**

61. Any player who is obliged to leave a table before the rubber is concluded may, with the consent of the other three players, appoint a substitute. . If such consent is not

given or if it is impossible to obtain a substitute the score shall be made up in accordance with the provisions of the last preceding law

### **DAMAGED CARD**

62 If any card has been torn or so marked that it can be identified from its back it must be replaced by a fresh card or a new pack must be obtained

### **CALLING FOR NEW CARDS**

63 Any player after a hand has been played and before the pack is cut for the next deal may call for fresh cards at his own expense He must call for two new packs of which the player about to deal takes his choice

### **DEALING, ETC., FOR PARTNER.**

64 A player may not shuffle cut or deal for his partner without the permission of the opponents

### **REQUESTING BYSTANDER TO DECIDE.**

65 Any question may by agreement amongst the players be referred for decision to a bystander

### **BETS ON RUBBER.**

66 (1) Bets on the result of a rubber are decided by reference to points won and not by reference to games won

(2) If the difference in points between the two sides is too small to involve any money passing between the players or if a rubber is closed before two games have been won by either side (Laws 60 and 61) bets on the result are void

### **ETIQUETTE**

The following rules belong to the established Etiquette of Auction Bridge They are not included in the laws as it is difficult—in some cases impossible—to apply any

penalty for their infraction, and the only remedy is to cease playing with those who habitually disregard them

It is to be borne in mind that, from the nature of the conditions under which the game is played, acts may be so done, and words so spoken, as to convey a very distinct intimation to a partner To do so is to offend against the most important of the proprieties of the game

Bids should be made in a simple and uniform manner, *e g.*, by saying, "One Heart," "One No Trump," etc The use of the expression, "Pass," is inadvisable, the correct term to use is, "No Bid"

It is unfair purposely to make a bid which is insufficient to overbid the previous one

Anyone, having the lead and one or more winning cards to play, should not draw a second card out of his hand until his partner has played to the first trick, such act being a distinct intimation that the former has played a winning card, or desires to have the lead left to him

A player who has looked at his cards, ought not to give any indication by word or gesture as to the nature of his hand, or call the attention of his partner to the score of the game

A player who requires the cards to be specified under Law 19 (11), should do so for his own information only, and not in order to invite the attention of his partner

No player should object to refer any disputed question of fact to a bystander who has no interest in the game

It is unfair to revoke purposely, or to make a second revoke in order to conceal the first

Tricks should not be stacked, or formed into a "book," but should be so arranged that they can be easily counted



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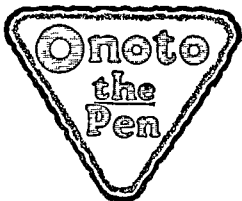
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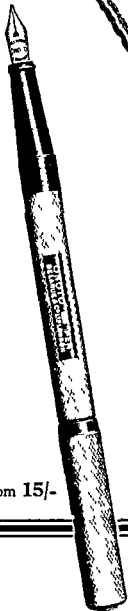
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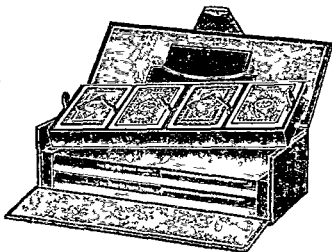
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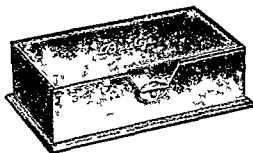
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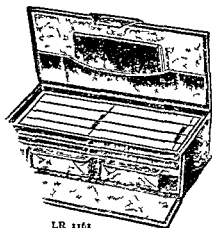
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carried as a handbag by  
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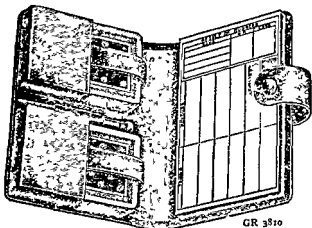
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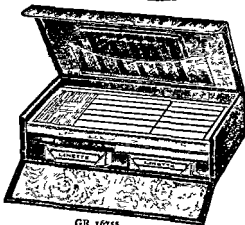


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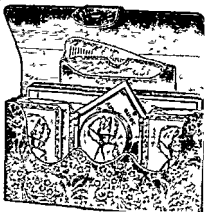
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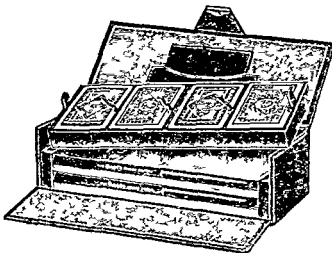
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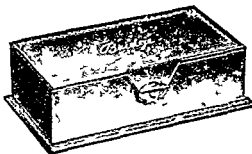
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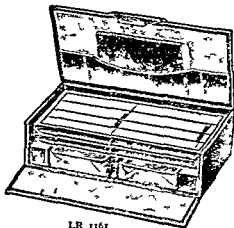
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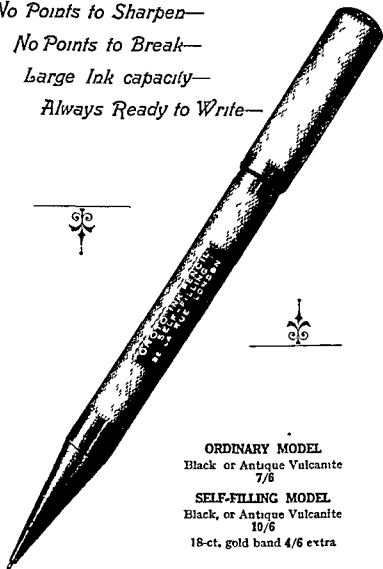
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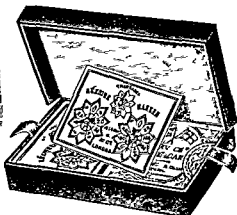
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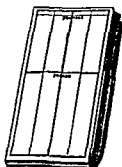
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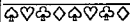
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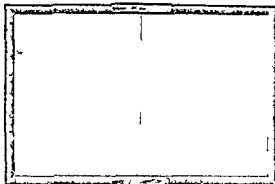
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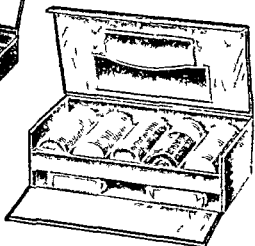
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